# Report on National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Conservation Project in South Asia

March 2010

## A CLEAN BEACH - A TOURIST HEAVAN

Funded by UNEP and Governments of
Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

SACEP UNEP SAS

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FEE UNWTO

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# Annex II/B

# 1. Final Report – Implementing Partner

## 1. Background Information

1.1. **MoU brief title:**
Small Scale Funding Agreement

1.2. **Name of IP (cooperating agency/supporting organization):**
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

1.3. **UNEP budget line:**
FPL 4406-1145-2632-2207

1.4. **Total budget from UNEP**
USD 12,400

1.5. **MOU Starting date:**
15/12/2009

1.6. **MoU Completion date**
15/04/2010 extended upto 31/05/10

1.7. **Overall Objectives of the Project**
The key objective of the present project is to initiate a national dialogue and to develop a regional project to pilot test the Blue Flag Programme for selected stretches of coast in the South Asian Region. This SSFA is made to support SACEP as the Secretariat of SASP to visit SAS member countries with an Expert on the adoption of voluntary initiatives such as Environmental Guidelines, Codes of Conduct and Certification Schemes to encourage commitment towards conservation on the requirement of beach certification.

1.8. **Initially expected outputs (as per MOU)**

- Mission reports outlining challenges and priorities for the establishment of the Blue Flag Programme in each of the five countries;
- Five Workshop Reports including work plans to pilot test the national level initiatives;
- Feasibility studies including national lists of priority stretches of coast in the relevant countries;
- Information material on Blue Flag for distribution;
- UNEP sponsorship and assistance acknowledged in reports and proposals;
- A regional project proposal for the implementation of Blue Flag in the SAS region

1.9. **Amendments**

Activity/outputs : Due to unavoidable circumstances the National Workshop at Pakistan was not conducted.

1.10. **Partners and leveraged resources**

- Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) – Technical Support (Ms Alison Kelly, Blue Flag Manager for South Africa assisted in conducting National Workshops)
- National Focal Points of SASP (Environmental Ministries of Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Ministry of Earth Sciences, India) – Arrangements and conduction of National Workshops
- UN World Tourism Organization (UN-WTO) – Issuing letter for their respective National Focal Points (Ministry of Tourism in each country)

## 2. Project Status

| 2.1 **Information on the delivery of the project** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Activities/Outputs** | **Status** | **Results/Impacts** |
| 1 | Mission reports outlining challenges and priorities | Completed for 4 countries | Refer Item 4 Bullet 2 |
| 2 | Five Workshop reports | Completed for 4 countries | Refer Item 4 Bullet 2 |
| 3 | Feasibility studies including national lists of priority stretches of coast | On-going | At National Level |
| 4 | UNEP sponsorship and assistance acknowledged in reports and proposals | Completed | Refer Item 4 Bullet 2 |
| 5 | A regional project proposal | On-going | Draft available |

2.2 If the project activities and outputs listed in the work plan were not completed and/or changes/delays in project delivery were faced, provide reasons and details of remedial action that were taken.

Due to unavoidable circumstances the National Workshop in Pakistan was not conducted as planned according to the original schedule. The National Workshop of Pakistan which was re-scheduled for the 10th May 2010 was also postponed.

- **Project effectiveness or impact and lessons learned**

The outcome of the workshops were very encouraging. The countries have agreed to identify an NGO and to work on the Feasibility Study to determine whether the necessary elements to support the establishment of a Blue Flag programme are in place at the selected beaches. Also agencies participated in the workshops agreed to be involved in the National Committee which will be

formulated and approved by the respective Government. Subsequently national work plan is to be developed to Pilot test and FEE is expected to appoint a "Mentor" to work closely with countries. SASP/SACEP will be developing a Regional Project from the inputs received at the workshops. During the meeting with Hon' Ministers, keen interest was expressed and their continuous support for the programme was indicated.

- Hon' Minister of Housing, Transport and Environment, Mr. Mohamed Aslam and Hon' Minister of State for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Mr. Thoyyib Ahmed Waheed inaugurated the workshop in Maldives and Dr.Hasan Mahmud, Hon' Minister of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh discussed with SACEP and FEE on the way forward. Mr Aleixo Sequeira, Hon' Minister of Environment Government of Goa, India could not be met during that visit. However during the subsequent meeting of SASP Co-ordinator in April 2010 the Hon' Minister showed keen interest and agreed to pursue this programme
- The benefits of implementing the Blue Flag Programme for sustainable coastal tourism towards conservation and management of marine environment was very well appreciated by the participants;
- It was agreed by the countries that through official formalities a committee would be constituted and will be intimated to SACEP
- The work on preparation of feasibility study and to develop a project proposal for their priority coastal stretches has been initiated.

## 3. List of attached documents

- Summary Report on the National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme in South Asia
- National Workshop Reports – including agenda, list of participants, presentations and a collective summary of answers obtained for the questioner prepared by SACEP
- Documents distributed at workshop
- Presentations by Ms. Alison Kelly
- Presentation by Dr R. Venketasan
- Mission Report
- Draft Regional Project

**Name and title of responsible official from Implementing Partner (as per MoU)**

Signature : ..... Date : 31/05/2010

Jacintha S. Tissera
Officiating Director General
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

## Annex II/C

# 1. Expenditure Report –Implementing Partner

**1. MOU brief title:** Small Scale Funding Agreement

**2. Name of Implementing Partner:** South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)

**3. UNEP budget line(s) nr:** (FPL 4406-1145-2632-2207)

**4. Total budget from UNEP** *(USD)*: 12,400/-

**5. MOU starting date** *(date of last signature)*: 15/12/2009

**6. MOU completion date** (expiry): 15/04/2010 extended upto 31/05/10

**7. Detailed Budget Allocation:**

| | Description of Allocations from UNEP | Planned Budget Allocation *(as per MOU in USD)* | Amendment* (s) *(if any, in USD)* | Actual expenditures incurred *(USD)* | Balance *(~~Unspent~~/ Overspent** in USD)* | Liquidated from UNEP *(USD)* | Un-liquidated from UNEP *(USD)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | *Air tickets* | 7,088.00 | | 7,093.05 | | 7,088.00 | |
| 2. | *Perdiem* | 4,660.00 | | 4,450.00 | | 4,660.00 | |
| 3. | *Printing of information handouts, Posters, report* | 652.00 | | 1,003.10 | | 652.00 | |
| | **TOTAL** | 12,400.00 | | 12,546.15 | 146.15 | 12,400.00 | |

**If any amendments were done, please give date*
***overspending should only occur if prior agreement from UNEP has been received.*

**8. Explanations for Balance** (*~~Unspent~~/ Overspent (if any)*); USD 146.15 (Borne by SACEP)
*Please give detailed explanation why balance was incurred.*

**Name and Title of the responsible official from the Implementing Partner** *(as per MOU)*:

Signature: ..... Date: 31/05/2010
Jacintha S. Tissera
Officiating Director General
SACEP

**Final approval and comments from UNEP Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch:**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

# 2. Summary Report on the National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme in South Asia

3 -11 March 2010

Organized by
South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

Funded by
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Supported by
Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)
UN World Tourist Organisation (UN-WTO)

and

Governments of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

## 1. Background

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), as the secretariat of the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP) is mandated to promote, protect and manage the marine environment and related coastal ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner. One of the three objectives of SASP is to establish a regional co-operative network of activities concerning subjects/ projects of mutual interest for the whole region.

The five maritime partner countries of the SASP; Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are endeavored with a rich coastal and marine resource base which has enormous potential to develop sustainable tourism industry. Tourism and recreation associated with "sea and sun", is recognized as an essential component of domestic and international trade and a major contributor to economic growth in the region. The costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism not only involves economic loss to the industry but also leads to the loss of traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality, and the natural resource base, which the industry depend upon. Governments as well as businesses are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward with the attempt of being more responsive to environment and community requirements. In light of the above, the application of a beach certification scheme "Blue Flag Programme" which is a voluntary eco-label Programme designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices as well as safety among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management is highly appropriate.

To introduce the above programme, SACEP/SASP prepared a project concept titled "Blue Flag Beach Certification Scheme for South Asia Seas Region: A Clean Beach – A Tourist Haven" with the main objective of for initiating a national dialogue and to develop a regional project to pilot test the Blue Flag Programme for selected coastal stretches in the region. In this activity SACEP/SASP collaborated with several partner organizations such as the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), responsible for managing the Blue Flag Programme at international level, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN–World Tourist Organization (UNWTO). On request from SACEP/SASP FEE agreed to provide technical support and deputed Ms Alison Kelly, the South African Blue Flag Manager as their representative.

SACEP/SASP managed to secure financial support from UNEP, under a Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) for implementing the project. This SSFA supported the SASP Co-ordinator and the FEE Expert to visit the five countries to conduct National workshops as the initial step for introducing the Blue Flag Programme to the Region.

The UN-WTO supported the initiative through sending letters to their respective National Focal Points in the five countries indicating the importance of joining this activity. This boosted SACEP's efforts and led to close co-ordination between the two important Ministries (i.e., Environment and Tourism) related to this programme in each country.

SACEP's National Focal Points for the Regional Seas Programme provided in-kind and financial support by organizing workshops at country level. Further on request of SACEP/SASP, the

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) uplinked the workshops as a national activity marking the occasion of the International Year of Biodiversity.

## 2. The Structure of National Workshops

SASP/SACEP with technical support from Ms Alison Kelly, the expert from FEE conducted a series of National Workshops in Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka from 3 to 11 March 2010 (Refer Table 1). The Workshop in Pakistan was postponed due to operational constrains and will be conducted in a later date. The workshop provided a platform for establishing a national programme of action for the Blue Flag Programme in each country.

Table 1: National Workshops schedule

| Country | Place | Date | Main Organizer | No of participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | Dhaka | 4 March | Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project, Department of Environment | 36 |
| Maldives | Male' | 7 March | Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment | 29 |
| India | Panjim, Goa | 9 March | Tourism Department under the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Goa | 30 |
| Sri Lanka | Colombo | 11 March | Ministry of Environment and Forest | 27 |

The four Country workshops provided a broad assessment of the current status of coastal tourism as well as the priority actions that needed to be taken in order to develop sustainable coastal tourism industry, which is environmentally, socially and culturally sensitive. Around 30-35 participants representing relevant stakeholders including Government Agencies (Environment, Tourism, and Fisheries & Shipping), Academia, Tourism industry, IUCN, WWF, NGOs, Press & Media etc., were present at each workshop.

At each of these workshops, Ms Alison Kelly delivered lectures on Blue Flag Beach Programme process and methodologies applied and case studies on how Government of South Africa supported this programme through NGO which is successfully being implemented in 32 beaches during the last 10 years. Dr. Venkatesan, SASP Co-ordinator presented the importance of Global Programme of Action (GPA) on protecting the marine environment from land-based activities and reported the Status of Conventions and Protocols on marine environment of the South Asian Seas countries. This report gives insight overview on international and regional agreements ratified by SAS member countries through Ministries of Environment, Fisheries, Shipping and Law. Next in Agenda were key sectoral presentations by National Experts showing the policy and research initiatives of their Governments in the areas such as coastal protection, water quality, eco-tourism and promoting sustainable tourism in general. This was followed by an elaborative discussion amongst the participants and the two experts on how to adopt this eco-labeling venture at country level. Issues

such as establishment of a national co-ordinating committee, identification of a suitable NGO as well as suitable beach stretches for pilot testing the initiative were discussed in length.

Information materials developed to promote the Blue Flag certifications such as banner, Catalogue, Post Card, Pamphlet prepared by SACEP/SASP were distributed at each workshop. To obtain baseline information to prepare the Regional Project, the participants were requested to fill a questioner prepared by SACEP/SASP. Further a Feasibility study questionnaire prepared by FEE was also distributed.

## 3. Outcomes of the Workshop

The outcomes of the workshops were very encouraging as the countries have agreed to identify an NGO and to work on the Feasibility Study to determine whether the necessary elements to support the establishment of a Blue Flag Programme are in place at the selected beaches. Also agencies participated in the workshop agreed to be involved in the National Committee which will be formulated and approved by the Government. Subsequently National Work Plan is to be developed to Pilot Test and FEE is expected to appoint a "Mentor" to work closely with the countries. SASP/SACEP is to develop a Regional Project with the inputs received from the workshops. During the meeting with Hon' Ministers, keen interest was expressed and their continuous support for the programme was indicated.

The key points of the Workshops are as follows :

- Hon' Minister of Housing, Transport and Environment, Mr. Mohamed Aslam and Hon' Minister of State for Tourism, Arts and Culture Mr. Thoyyib Ahmed Waheed inaugurated the Workshop in Maldives and Hon' Minister of Environment and Forests, Dr.Hasan Mahmud, Bangladesh discussed on the way forward with SACEP and FEE. Mr Aleixo Sequeira, Hon' Minister of Environment, Government of Goa, India, could not be met during that visit. However during the subsequent meeting of the SASP Co-ordinator in April 2010 the Hon' Minister showed keen interest and agreed to pursue this programme.
- The benefits of implementing the Blue Flag Programme for sustainable coastal tourism towards conservation and management of marine environment was appreciated by the participants;
- It was agreed by the countries, that through official formalities, a committee would be constituted and will be intimated to SACEP
- The work on preparation of a feasibility study and developing a project proposal for their priority coastal stretches has been initiated.
- Government of Goa, India has agreed to initiate work on the Feasibility Study

## 4. The Way Forward

A Draft Regional Project Proposal will be prepared by SACEP with the inputs received from countries which will be forwarded to UNEP and other funding agencies for implementation.

# 3. National Workshop Reports on Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme

## 3.1. Bangladesh

### Meeting with Hon' Minister by SACEP & FEE

In Bangladesh on 3rd March a separate meeting was held with Dr.Hasan Mahmud Hon Minister of Environment and Forests. He showed interest and appreciated efforts of SACEP UNEP and FEE for bringing such programme for the benefit of Bangladesh and advised officials to formulate detailed work plan to execute this programme in selected beach stretches. He further reiterated that in future during the formulation of new policy such measures could be incorporated as a part of national activity. This meeting provided the momentum not only to the workshop in Dhaka but to the whole programme planned in the SAS region

### Relevance to Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a unique scenery which is blessed with the largest riverine delta in the world. It has vast inland waterways and southern side with Bay of Bengal. Annually about 2000 sea-going vessels call at sea ports and about 1000 vessels are plying in the inland waterways. The country has explored gas under the seabed. Bangladesh imports over one million ton of crude oil having sustainable volume of clean petroleum products every year. Bangladesh's economy substantially depends on maritime activities, about ¼ of the domestic cargo and passenger traffic is carried by about 9000 inland & coastal ships. Bangladesh ranks third in ship scrapping after China and India.

In Bangladesh, the coastal areas are important tourist destinations all over the world. In many coastal areas tourism presents the most important economic activity. However, unplanned and poorly managed tourism leads to the loss of traditional local life style, environmental quality, biodiversity and other natural resources. On the other hand properly planned and well managed tourism can minimize impacts on coastal environments and serve as driving force for sustainable development of local communities and destinations. In the light of the above the 'Blue Flag' Programme is initiated to encourage Governments and Businesses to protect, conserve and restore coastal environment and to promote sustainable tourism. The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness, increase environmental good practices as well as safety among tourists and local people. Four types of criteria are used for Blue Flag beach certification –

1. Environmental Education and Information
2. Water Quality
3. Environmental Management
4. Safety & Services

The certification has been successfully used in other parts of the world as one of the management tool. Experiences gained from Europe and other countries clearly show that the vast improvement

of the quality of the coastal environment with the implementation of Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme. It is also witnessed by the increased number of tourist visited these beaches.

The steps for introducing the Blue Flag Certification in a country includes – organizing a national level Blue Flag workshop, formation of National Blue Flag Committee with relevant stakeholders, undertake a Blue Flag feasibility study, review the criteria and carry out a Blue Flag Pilot project.

On the request of SACEP, Government of Bangladesh initiated the activity by constituting a Committee to conduct this event and list of members are given below :-

1. Mr. Md. Jafar Siddique : Convener
   National Project Director, CWBMP
2. Mr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, PhD : Member
   Director (Planning) & Convener ECA Cell, Department of Environment
3. Mr. S. M. Munjurul Hannan Khan : Member
   Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forest
4. Mr. Mohammed Solaiman Haider : Member
   Deputy Director (Technical), Department of Environment
5. Mr. Mamunul H. Khan : Member
   Programme Analyst, UNDP
6. Mr. Abdullah Zhiruddin Ahmed : Member
   Communication Officer, CWBMP

## National Workshop in Bangladesh

The schedule for the workshop which was organized by the Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project (CWBMP), Department of Environment at Chameli Conference Hall, Department of Environment, Agargaon, Dhaka on 4 March 2010.

## Agenda

09.00: Registration of Participants

09.30: Recitation from the Holy Qur'aan – Hafej Mawlana Kari Zobaair Ahmad.

09.35: Inauguration:
Dr. Mihir Kanti Majumder, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forest

09.45: Threats to Coastal Environment and SACEP & SASP Activities,
Dr. R Venkatesan, Coordinator, South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)

10.45: Tea
11.00: About FEE and Achievements of Blue Flag Programme
Ms. Alison Kelly, Foundation of Environment Education, South Africa

12.00: National Policy and Regulations: Focus on Coastal Tourism Industry:
Professor Ainun Nishat, Ph D, Senior Advisor, Climate Change, IUCN

12.30: Status of Marine Environment in Bangladesh:
Professor Dr. Mohammad Zafar, Institute of Marine Science University of Chittagong

01.00: Discussion on Questionnaire distributed and Feedback from the Participants

01.30: Next Course of Action

01.55: Concluding Speech:
Dr. Zafar Ahmed khan, Director General, Department of Environment

02.10: Lunch

List of Participants of the Workshop

| Sl. No. | Name | Designation and Organization Name |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Md. Jafar Siddique | National Project Director<br>Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project (CWBMP),<br>Dept. of Environment (DoE) |
| 2 | Ms. Alison Kelly | Foundation for Environmental Education |
| 3 | Rukshana Sultana | Research Fellow, CARINAM (NGO) |
| 4 | Md. Mahbubur Rahman | Project Manager, CWBMP |
| 5 | Ahmed Mujaffar | Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Information |
| 6 | Mohammad Abdul Mannan | |
| 7 | Faruk Ahmed | CWBMP, DoE |
| 8 | Dr. R. Venkatesan | Regional Coordinator, SACEP |
| 10 | Prof. Dr. Ainun Nishat | IUCN |
| 11 | Samar Das | DoE |
| 12 | Commander M. Ashraf Uddin | Commanding Officer, CGHA Support Unit, Bangladesh Coast Guard |
| 13 | Mohammad Asmaul Hossain | General Manager, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism |
| 14 | Golam Saifuddin | Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism |
| 15 | Mohammad Badiuzzaman | Principal, Fire Service and Civil Defence Training Complex |
| 16 | Mohammad Humayun Kabir | Program Officer, Bangladesh POUSH (NGO) |
| 17 | Muhammad Azam | Director, Department of Mass Communication, Ministry of Information |
| 18 | Mohammad Showkat Osman | Climate Change Cell, DoE |
| 19 | Mohammad Mahfuzul Haque | Deputy Director, Radio Bangladesh |
| 20 | Mohammad Nazmul Islam | ADM, District Administration, Patuakhali |
| 21 | Prof. Dr. Mohammad Zafar | Institute of Marine Science, University of Chittagong, Chittagong |
| 22 | Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed | Director, DoE |
| 23 | Abdullah Zahiruddin Ahmad | United Nations Volunteer, CWBMP |
| 24 | Dr. S.M.A Rashid | Chief Executive, CARINAM |
| 25 | Dr. Moazzem Hossain | Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock |
| 26 | Mr. Zahid Hossain | Chief Inspector, Ministry of Shipping |
| 27 | Mohammad Badruzzaman | Executive Producer (Program), Bangladesh Television |
| 28 | Major Golam Kibria Khan Chowdhury | Director General, Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development Board |
| 29 | Abdur Rahman | General Secretary, Zoological Society of Bangladesh |
| 30 | Dr. Abdur Rob Mollah | Chairman, NACOM (NGO working in Coastal Area) |
| 31 | Abdul Wahab Alonda | Project Coordinator, Bangladesh Center for Village Development (NGO) |
| 32 | Saeedul Islam | Executive Director, Bangladesh Center for Village Development (NGO) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 33 | AKM Rafiqul Islam | Ecologically Critical Area Management Officer, CWBMP, DoE |
| 34 | Md. Sajjadul Islam | Deputy Chief, Ministry of Shipping |
| 35 | Monirul Haque | CARINAM |
| 36 | Mohammad Mezbaur Rahman | Climate Change Cell, DoE |

## The Workshop

As a part of introducing the idea of Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme to Bangladesh a National Workshop was organized with the participation of SACEP, FEE, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, and all other relevant national stakeholders. The workshop was organized by the Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project of the Department of Environment.

In the workshop Dr. R. Venkatesan, SASP Co-ordinator, South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) and Ms. Alison Kelly, Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE), South Africa discussed the details process of achieving Blue Flag certification and other country experiences. Prof. Dr. Ainun Nishat, Senior Advisor, Climate Change, IUCN discussed the National Policy and Regulations focusing on coastal tourism industry. Whereas, the status of marine environment in Bangladesh was presented by Prof. Dr. Mohammad Zafar of the Institute of Marine Science, University of Chittagong. Subsequently participants interacted and raised queries with SACEP and FEE on implementation of the project. There was unanimity among the stakeholders including Government officials representing various Ministries such as Environment, Shipping, and Tourism that this Blue Flag progarmme will be very useful and should be implemented on a pilot level initially with the support of Government through NGOs.

The way forward

It is expected that after the national workshop, Bangladesh would undertake a Blue Flag feasibility study and develop a project proposal for their priority coastal areas which will be forwarded to the SACEP secretariat. It was suggested during the workshop by participants that a regional project could be developed based on the proposals received and other information compiled at the national workshops. After obtaining the necessary approval from the member governments, SACEP, with the assistance of UNEP, can approach donors for implementing the regional project.

As a follow up after one month of conducting this workshop in April, a meeting was convened by the Secretary of Environment to discuss the future plan of action to implement this programme.

***The beaches identified to start this programme are Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Sea Beach, Sonadia Island and St. Martin's Island***

## INPUTS RECEIVED FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. International Tourist Arrival during the past five years (2005-2009)

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2,07,662 | 2,00,311 | 2,89,110 | 4,67,332 | - | 11,64,415 * |

* The above information was provided only by Mohammed Asmaul Hossain, Deputy Secretary, Bangladesh Parjatan Coorporation, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism.

2. Five main coastal areas preferred by tourists and the major ecosystem types associated with them.

| Sl. No. | Beach | Coral Reef | Mangrove | Sea Grass/ Sea Weed | Sand dunes | Areas of rich Biodiversity | Others (Specific) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cox's Bazar | | | | ✓ | | These destinations are also important for migratory bird and marine turtles |
| 2 | Inani | | | | ✓ | | |
| 3 | Teknaf | | | | ✓ | | |
| 4 | Sonadia Island | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 5 | St. Martin's Island | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | Supports coral associated biodiversity not found else where in the country |
| 6 | Kutubdia | | | | | | |
| 7 | Parki beach | | | | ✓ | | |
| 8 | Potenga | | | | | | |
| 9 | Kuakata | | | | ✓ | | |
| 10 | Kotka-Kochikhali | | | | | ✓ | |
| 11 | | | Sundarbans | | | ✓ | |

* Do not want tourism in Sonadia Island and need to reduce tourism in St. Martin's Island

** Cox's Bazar Teknaf beach is nearly 100 km. long. Tourism should not be encouraged in some ecologically sensitive parts.

*** Only Cox's Bazar and Kuakata beach have specific management committee.

3. List the most important and relevant impacts of tourism development in the coastal areas of the country (both positive and negative).

Positive Impacts :-

1. Revenue Earning
2. Income generation for local community (in low scale)

3. Some of the facilities developed for tourists improve the life standard of local people
4. Cultural exchange with people from inside and outside the country
5. Improvement of social skill of local people

Negative Impacts :-

1. Environmental degradation through pollution of land, water (by waste disposal and oil spillage) and sound.
2. Loss of biodiversity
3. Damage of habitats
4. Unplanned infrastructure development
5. Pressure on local resources, e.g – excessive extraction of ground water on St. Martin's Island
6. Conflict in resource and land use
7. Change in land ownership from locals to the outsiders
8. Change in land use
9. Disturbance of the balance of Ecosystem
10. Erosion of local and indigenous social, cultural and religious values
11. Demoralization of local youths and negative change in their behavior and attitude local people
12. Encourage child labor

4. List the legal and policy framework and mechanisms or measure put in place by relevant government institutions and the tourism industry for restricting/regulating the tourism related activities in the coastal areas for preventing environmental degradation and for enhancing the environmental values for tourism.

    1. Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act 1995
    2. Environment Conservation Rules 1997
    3. Bangladesh Wildlife Preservation Act
    4. Ecologically Critical Area rules
    5. Ecological Zoning of the Coastal ECAs
    6. Awareness campaign

5. Activities introduced in the country to minimize increase intensity of pressure from domestic tourism in coastal areas, especially during weekends and holidays.

    1. Introduction of waste management system in some beaches
    2. Awareness raising activities in some areas mainly focusing on responsible waste disposal
    3. Deployment of conservation guards in St. Martin's Island to prevent tourists from wrong doing, e.g. - collecting Corals and other marine life.
    4. Ecological zoning are being developed by CWBMP where there is provision of keeping some of the coastal areas out of tourism practices to reduce impact.

6. List of protected coastal and marine areas (e.g. National Parks, Biosphere reserves, Sanctuaries etc.) where tourism is presently being practiced.
    1. Sundarbans (Reserve forest, Ramsar Site and UNESCO World Heritage site). Shundarbans has 3 wildlife sanctuaries – Shundarbans East, Shundarbans West and Shundarbans South. The first two are visited by tourists.

2. Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Sea Beach (Ecologically Critical Area - ECA)
3. Sonadia Island (ECA)
4. St. Martin's Island [Country's only coral bearing Island] (ECA)
5. Thaim Lhali (Game Reserve)
6. Nijhum Dweep (National Park)
7. Himchari (National Park)

7. Measures proposed to be introduced for regulating coastal tourism in the next few years.
   1. ECA Rules
   2. Ecological Zoning for Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Sea Beach, Sonadia Island and St. Martin's Island
   3. Master Plan for Cox's Bazar Urban Development

8. Other information related to promoting environment friendly coastal tourism.
   1. Development and implementation of plans and policies for coastal tourism should incorporate Environmental concerns and involvement of the Department of Environment.
   2. Costal plantation should be done with native plant species.
   3. Introduce environmental education programme
   4. Strict enforcement of existing laws
   5. Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project is trying to introduce tourism best practices and carrying out awareness raising activities in the coastal ECAs
   6. Comprehensive government policy and actions with the Ministry of Environment and Forest.
   7. Enhance coordination between Tourism Department and the Department of Environment

9. Expression of individual interest to involve in the Blue Flag programme
   1. Nature Conservation Management (NACOM) has developed a number of school based Nature Club in the Cox's Bazar – Teknaf Sea Beach ECA while working as partner NGO of CWBMP of the Department of Environment. NACOM is willing to engage the clubs for biodiversity conservation, monitoring and other suitable activities under the Blue Flag Programme. (Prof. Dr. Abdur Rob Mollah, Chairman, NACOM)

   2. Bangladesh Coast Guard may participate Blue Flag Programme in ensuring compliance of rules and regulations in the beach areas where it has its presence.

   3. Wish to participate in education and advocacy activities of Blue Flag Programme (Dr. SMA Rashid, CARINAM).

   4. I have the experience of working for raising awareness of tourists in coastal areas. Therefore I would like to contribute in designing environmental education activities while Blue Flag Programme will be implemented. (Abdullah Zahiruddin Ahmad, UN Volunteer, CWBMP)

PRESS COVERAGE

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The Daily Star

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**Business**

# 'Blue Flag' to promote tourism in coastal areas

## Star Business Report

The Department of Environment is going to introduce the 'Blue Flag' programme, a special international programme to promote eco tourism in the country's coastal areas.
The Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label certification programme that is sponsored by the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE), a Denmark based international non-governmental organisations representing 59 countries.
A feasibility study will be conducted in a couple of months to design a project proposal for the country's coastal areas, which is to be funded by the UN environment programme.

Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project (CWBMP) under the Department of Environment organised a national workshop yesterday to introduce the Blue Flag programme in the country. Representatives from the environment and forest ministry, civil aviation and tourism ministry, FEE and South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) attended the workshop at the IDB Bhaban.
At the workshop, speakers said more tourists are attracted to beaches where the Blue Flag programme was introduced earlier. Under this programme, properly planned and well-managed tourism is promoted, which can minimise the impacts on coastal environments and serve as a driving force for sustainable development of local communities, speakers said. The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness, increase environmental good practices as well as safety among tourists and local people. It has been awarded to over 3,200 beaches and marinas in 38 countries across the world since 1988. SACEP has taken the initiative to introduce the Blue Flag programme in different countries in this region.

Prof Dr Ainun Nishat, senior adviser of Climate Change, IUCN, Dr Mohammad Zafar of the Institute of Marine Science at Chittagong University, Dr R Venkatesan of Regional Coordinator of SACEP and Alison Kelly from FEE, South Africa, also spoke at the workshop.

## 3.2 India

On the request of SACEP to Ministry of Environment & Forests and Ministry of Earth Sciences the focal points for SACEP and SASP respectively, it was decided to convene this workshop at Goa which is preferred tourist destination and could be implemented effectively. The Government of Goa came forward to organise this event and Goa Tourism Department under the Ministry of Tourism was identified to organise this event. The stakeholders were identified jointly with SACEP and relevant Ministries.

The details of the event is given below :-

National Workshop in Goa india

Agenda
9 March 2010

Organized by
South Asian Seas Programme, South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, Sri Lanka
Ministry of Environment & Forests, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of Goa
With support of
United Nations Environment Programme, Kenya
United Nations World tourism organization Spain
Foundation of Environmental Education, Denmark
Venue : Goa India

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 10 00 hrs | inauguration function | Chief Guest Mr Nikhil Desai Managing Director Goa Tourism |
| 10 30 hrs | High Tea | |
| 10 45 hrs | Brief outlook on the UNEP supported National workshops in South Asia<br>Introduction on activities of SACEP/SASP<br>Marine Environmental conventions and Protocols in South Asia | Dr R Venkatesan SACEP Colombo |
| 11 00 hrs | Status of Coastal environment in Goa | Dr Mascarenes Scientist National institute of Oceanography Goa |
| 11 45 hrs | Blue Flag an eco label for beaches | Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |
| 12 00 hrs | Case study : Successful implementation of Blue Flag in South Africa | Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |
| 12 45 hrs | discussion on Questionnaire for Blue Flag beach certification<br>Identification of coastal searches for Blue flag Beach certification<br>Discussion on Formation of national Committee<br>Inputs to prepare a regional project<br>Any other suggestions | |
| 13 00 hrs | Lunch break | |

# The Workshop

The workshop was organised by Goa Tourism Development Corporation, Ministry of Environment Government of Goa with support of Ministry of Environment and Forests Government of India and was represented by Ministry of Earth Sciences by National Center for Ocean and Antarctic Research, National Institute of Oceanography Goa, WWF, Indian Tourism Development Corporation, Ministry of Fisheries Tourism Industry, NGOs, students etc., The stakeholders attended the meeting were from diversified fields.

The Government of India through Ministry of Environment and Forests and Ministry of Earth Sciences have supported this project and Government of Goa through the Ministry of Environment and Goa Tourism Development Corporation have joined together to host this event in Goa considering the important of coastal Tourism and Conservation and management of marine environment. The workshop is organizing this workshop on 9 March 2010.

After the inaugural function presentations were made by Dr Venkatesan and Ms Alison Kelly. Subsequently Dr Mascarenes Senior Scientist working on coastal environment at the premier Indian research Organisation, institute National Institute of Oceanography spoke about the significance of coastal ecosystem and in particular about the beach profile and geomorphological details. He also explained about the occurrences of oil spillage from eth vessels and presence of mining activities and reverie transport and their impacts on the marine environment. Goa being preferred tourism destination in particular, local and European tourist influx has increased recently and this could affect the beaches. His speech was well received by participants and Press & Media wanted more information on his work on Goa Beaches.

After the workshop in Goa India a separate meeting was held with Mr Michael D'Souza Director of Environment on the feasibility study work to be undertaken by Government of Goa. The Feasibility Study questionnaire was discussed to collect information to determine whether the necessary elements to support the establishment of a Blue Flag programme are in place. He enquired with Ms Alison Kelly on the role of Government of South Africa and wanted to adopt the same model to support NGO to undertake this programme and detailed modalities of executing this project was discussed. He assured that he would discuss with Managing Director Goa Tourism and shall work on the feasibility study in selected beaches identified during the workshop.

Field Visit : Subsequently a field tour to two beaches namely Calangute and Baga were organized by Goa Government. After these visits, FEE opined that these beaches are suitable to undertake this programme and explained to them on activities to be undertaken prior to feasibility study.

In Goa India Mr Aleixo Sequeira, Hon Minister of Environment Government of Goa could not attend the workshop due to official commitments But during the subsequent visit of Dr R Venkatesan SACEP in April 2010 the subject matter was discussed in length in another meeting he showed keen interest and agreed to pursue this programme and he discussed with SACEP on the way forward.

The Way forward

Following this workshop at Goa Goa is chosen by government of India as model site to conduct this study. It is expected to follow UNEP/UNWTO/FEE publication Awards for Improving the Coastal Environment: the Example of the Blue Flag. This proven methodology has five steps for starting the Blue Flag Programme such as: Conduct a National Blue Flag Workshop; Establish a National Blue Flag Committee; Initiate a Blue Flag Feasibility Study; Review the criteria; and carry out a Blue Flag Pilot Phase. A successful Blue Flag Programme could be supported by national policies and frameworks on safety, water quality, environmental education, waste management, tourism, recreation, coastal zone management and others.

***The beaches identified to start this programme are Miramar, Baga and Calangute***

INPUTS RECEIVED FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. International Tourist Arrivals during the past five years (2005-2009)

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 336,803 | 380,414 | 388,457 | 351,123 | 376,640 |

2. Five main coastal areas preferred by tourists and the major ecosystem types associated with them

| | | Coral reef | Mangrove | Sea grass | Sand dunes | Areas of rich biodiversity | Other specify |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Colva | | | | | | |
| 2 | Miramar | | | | | | |
| 3 | Bogamalo | | | | | | |
| 4 | Calangute | | | | | | |
| 5 | Arambol | | | | | | |
| 6 | Anjuna | | | | | | |
| 7 | Baga | | | | | | |
| 8 | Morjim | | | | | | Turtle nesting |
| 9 | Candolim | | | | | | |

3. List the most important and relevant impacts of tourism development in the coastal areas of the country (both positive and negative)
    - Positive Impacts :-
        - Locals get opportunity to earn their livelihood
        - Standard of living enhanced
        - People have converted their houses into commercial units like Hotels, Restaurants etc
        - Locals got employed in Hotels, clubs, shopping Malls etc
        - Locals acquired taxi, two wheelers for business purpose
        - Locals learnt foreign language and based on that got employment in overseas
        - Locals got opportunity to open Travel agencies, money exchange, air ticketing, bus ticketing etc
        - Organized beach safety set in recently
        - Development of infrastructure

    - Negative Impacts :-
        - Put additional pressure on civic amenities like water, electricity etc
        - Spread of HIV AIDS and other diseases
        - Illegal Drugs consumption related issues
        - Child abuse
        - Since touristic business is very lucrative, foreigners started business in Goa, also acquired land and property
        - Unorganized water sports, which are illegally done
        - Littering and haphazard solid waste disposal
        - Beach shack mismanagement

- Overcrowding of beaches
- Drowning incidents – lack of lifeguards
- Pollution –sewage disposal
- No control over street hawkers
- Traditional occupations are weaning
- Increased crime
- Demographic changes (migration)
- Unorganized parking
- Political influence
- Degradation of natural resources
- Impact on sea turtle nesting beaches
- Destruction of dunes
- Stray dogs and beggars
- Noise pollution through fireworks and late night music
- Hill cutting

4. List the legal and policy framework and mechanisms or measures put in place by relevant Government Institutions and the tourism industry for restricting/regulating the tourism related activities in the coastal areas for preventing environmental degradation and for enhancing the environmental values for tourism
   - The Nos. of temporary shacks on the beaches are restricted keeping in mid the length of the beach
   - It has been made mandatory to provide FRP toilets alongside temporary shacks
   - Contractors engaged for cleaning beaches
   - Construction is not permitted in CRZ areas
   - Planting trees in beaches
   - A good beach Cares Policy (also known as the SHACK Policy
   - Lifeguard posts along with beach petrol
   - Development of a comprehensive beach protection policy
   - Protection of turtle nesting sites during nesting periods – some areas is protected by the Forest Department

5. Activities introduced in the country to minimize increased intensity of pressure from domestic tourism in coastal areas, especially during weekends and holidays.
   - Seminars and workshops are conducted in educational institutions to create awareness among students and local communities
   - Local tourists can rent a bike on the beach
   - Divert the tourist to other less frequently used areas
   - Pollution restrictions should be stringent and to be religiously followed
   - Adventure activities beside beach tourism

6. List of legally protected coastal and marine areas (e.g. National Parks, Biosphere Reserves, Sanctuaries etc) where tourism is presently being practiced and also give information on the differences if any in the tourist activities practiced in these areas as compared to those in the other areas
   - Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary at Chorao

- Carambolim Lake at Carambolim
- Morjim, Anonda and Galg bay areas are being protected by the Forest Department for nesting turtles
- All coastal areas are protected through the high court via CRZ and CMZ Regulations

7. Measures proposed to be introduced for regulating coastal tourism in the next few years
   - Promotion of Heritage tourism
   - Proper Eco-friendly tourism policy
   - Ban totally construction in 500 MJC and Regulate beach shack to restrict all illegal activities
   - Blue and green Flag

8. Other information related to promoting environment friendly coastal tourism
   - Need a comprehensive tourism and development policy
   - Eco-schools in coastal areas should be formed
   - Carrying capacity of the area should be understood
   - Education and Awareness are the key for responsible tourism and therefore important
   - Ongoing research/data collection on the health of the ecosystem
   - Stop using plastic bags in coastal areas
   - Planting of Casuarina, mangrove trees etc.
   - Creating sand dunes
   - National Policies to be upgraded towards protection of coastal belt
   - Awards such as green key to be given immediately to hotels who are interested
   - Good Road network
   - Control of sound and drugs
   - Promote activities such as turtle observation, dolphin watching trips and water related adventure sports
   - Rural tourism

PRESS COVERAGE

The Navhind Times
THE NEWSPAPER YOU CAN TRUST

Oliver takes music and Goa to new heights
BUZZ P10

Kapil Dev inducted into ICC Hall of Fame
SPORTS P20

COVERING GOA SINCE 1963 VOL 48 ISSUE 21 PANAJI, GOA 20 PAGES PRICE RS 3 SMS: 9158909114 EMAIL: MYTAKE@NAVHINDTIMES.COM

Mr Mohd Dawn, managing director Goa Tourism Development Corporation is lighting the lamp along with Mr Dr R Venkatesan, coordinator of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme and Mr Alison Kelly, of Foundation for Environmental Education Denmark prior to a environment workshop organised by GTDC and hosting the GTDC Mission Residency.

## 3.3 Maldives

The Government of Maldives was quick to respond to SASP/SACP to organize this workshop and both Ministries of Tourism and Environment got involved in conducting this event successfully in a short notice. In coordination with SACEP stakeholders were identified and the Government of Maldives sent invitations to them. SACEP sent all relevant documents through email such as questionnaire which could be forwarded to invitees well in advance. The Press and Media were also invited.

The agenda for the inaugural function and workshop is given below :-

Agenda

7 March 2010

Venue; Faashanaa Maalam (Dharubaaruge)

| Inauguration programme | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1300 - 1303 hrs | Recitation of Holly Quran | Mr. Mohamed Mahid Moosa |
| 1303 - 1305 hrs | Introduction of the agenda | Mr. Ahmed Anwar |
| 1305 - 1307hrs | Brief introduction about the blue flag beach certification programme | Ms. Alison, Foundation for Environmental Education |
| 1307 - 1315 hrs | Opening Remarks | Minister of state for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Mr. Thoyyib Mohamed Waheed |
| End of Inauguration | | |
| 1315 - 1330hrs | Refreshment | |
| 1330 - 1345hrs | Brief outlook on the UNEP supported National workshops in South Asia<br>Introduction on activities of SACEP/SASP | Dr R Venkatesan SACEP Colombo |
| 1345 - 1400hrs | Environmental Acts & Regulations | Mr. Ahmed Nilaam, Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment |
| 1400 - 1415 hrs | Ecotourism in the Maldives | Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture |
| 1415 - 1445 hrs | Blue Flag an eco label for beaches | Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |
| 1445 - 1515 hrs | Case study : Successful implementation of Blue Flag in South Africa | Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1515 - 1545 hrs | Discussion on Questionnaire for Blue Flag beach certification<br>Identification of coastal searches for Blue flag Beach certification<br>Discussion on Formation of national Committee<br>Inputs to prepare a regional project<br>Any other suggestions<br>Open for discussion feedback from participants<br><br>Recommendations | |
| 1545 - 1600hrs | Tea break | |
| 1600 - 1615 hrs | Concluding Remarks | |

## The Workshop

The workshop inaugural function was attended by luminaries such as Hon Ministers of Government of Maldives - Mr. Mohamed Aslam, Hon Minister of Housing, Transport and Environment, Mr. Thoyyib Ahmed Waheed, Hon Minister of state for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Mr. Mohamed Shareef, Deputy Minister, Housing, Transport and Environment, Mr. Akram Kamaludeen, Deputy Minister, Housing, Transport and Environment. This gives the importance to the subject and its relevance to Maldives. During the special address by Mr. Thoyyib Mohamed Waheed Hon Minister of Tourism, he emphasized the need of such beach certification programme and its benefits in conservation and management of sensitive marine ecosystem. He also extended all support from his Ministry in executing eth feasibility study and to conduct the Blue Flag programme successfully.

Later during the discussion Mr. Mohamed Aslam, Hon Minister of Housing, Transport and Environment, Hon Minister of Environment suggested to start this programme in community beach and tourism beach.

Mr. Ahmed Nilaam, Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment spoke about environmental legislations and efforts taken by Government of Maldives on conservation and management of marine environment. The data presented on tourism showed that Maldives is preferred destination for Honeymoon couples and is attracting more European tourists.

Dr R Venkatesan delivered a lecture on activities of SASP and importance of Blue Flag programmed to Maldives. Ms Alison Kelly shared her experience in executing this programme successfully with support of given of South Africa. This information was very useful for Government.

Many Beach resort operator environmental managers attended this workshop. They traveled far away from Male and participated in discussion and some of them are in communication through email. It si understood that they have environmental regulatory measures being executed. However they would be delighted to have an internationally reputed certification programme like Blue Flag programme.

### *The way Forward*

All the participants were in agreement of the importance of implementing an eco-labeling imitative such as the Blue Flag Programme, as the country is now geared to promote tourism as one of the most important economic activity as well as new beach areas were now being opened up for tourism after more than 30 years of civil conflict. It was decided that a coordinating committee should be appointed and in this regard the Ministry of Environment and the Tourism Development Authority should work in close collaboration.

In order to meet water quality measurement methods they need to have laboratory facilities in place which is a constraint Government of Maldives have to evolves with the involvement of Ministry of Environment and Science Ministries.

***The beaches identified to start this programme are Male artificial beach, Male Swimming Track, Kuda Bandas, K.Villingill, S.Hithadhee, Angaga island and Kanti.***

Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment, Male', Republic of Maldives
National Workshop on Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme

Dharubaaruge, Male' 7 March 2010

ATTENDANCE SHEET

| No. | Name | Designation | Company | Mobile | Email |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Prapajir | Resident Manager | Centara Grand Island | 7979050 | Rmcirm@chr.co.th |
| 2 | Abdul Ibrahim | Manager General | Club Med Kani | 7771254 | kaneemafoi@clubmed.com |
| 3 | Sinan Rasheed | Asst. Manager Human Res. | Kuredu Holdings | 7784752 | Asstmanager.hr@ctnt.com |
| 4 | Mohamed Haneef | Manager SACES & Res. | Angaga Island Resort & Spa | 7783140 | angaga@dxxxx |
| 5 | Nimal Fernando | Environmental Manager | Kanuhara Resort | 7677710 | Nimal.Fernando@kanuhara |
| 6 | Faathina Hakeem | Regional Chief Engineer | Hilton Worldwide | 7776952 | Faathina.hakeem@hilton .com |
| 7 | Hassan Ali Manik | Maintenance Manager | Hilton Maldives | 7792460 | Hassam.manik@hilton.com |
| 8 | Randesh Kalangutkar | Security | Taj Exotica Resort & Spa | 7865538 | Tajsecurity.maldives@tajhotels.com |
| 9 | Ali Rasheed | House Keeper | Taj Exotica Resort & Spa | 7777819 | ayyadho@hotmail.com |
| 10 | A Yoosuf | Manager Operations | Kaimoo Travel | 7777393 | bakura@kaimoo.com |
| 11 | Moosa Mohamed | HR Manager | Sun island Resort & Spa | 7785720 | moosa@sun-island.com.mv |
| 12 | Nimal Shantha | Environment Manager | Sun island Resort & Spa | 7854981 | Environment@sun-island.com.mv |
| 13 | Mohamed Naeem | Deputy General Manager | Banyan Tree | 7788311 | Mohamed.naeem@banyantree.com |
| 14 | Fathih Jaleel | Manager, Dive Bandos | Bandos Island Resort | 7784536 | fathih@bandos.com.mv |
| 15 | Mohamed Asif | Supervisor / Eng | Banyan Tree | 7910951 | asvaru@hotmail.com |
| 16 | Jeewantha Jayasekera | Engineer | John Keels | 7415491 | Lagoonhakuraa-eng@choayahotels.com.mv |
| 17 | Abul Manaaf | CC Officer | KASA Holdings | 7786354 | manaafu@gmail.com |
| 18 | Benoit Capitaine | Dive Manager | Four Seasons Resorts - Kuda Huraa | 9800399 | BENOIT.CAPITAINE@FORSEASONS.Com |
| 19 | Mohamed Ashraf | Front Office Manager | Four Seasons Resort at Kuda huraa | 9801806 | Mohamed.ashroaf@fourseasons.com |
| 20 | Hussain Naseem | Asst. Director | One & Only Rexxxx | 7777015 | Hussain.com@oneandonlyxxxxxxxxxxxxx |

| No. | Name | Designation | Company | Mobile | Email |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | Asif Ibrahim | Male Office Manager | Diva Maldives | 9928019 | malediva@naiade.com |
| 22 | Thomas Le Berre | Marine Scientist | Seamarc Pvt Ltd. | 7787642 | thomas@seamarc.com |
| 23 | Peter Gremes | General Manager | Reethi Beach Resort | 7776560 | peter@reeth.beach.com.mv |
| 24 | Moosa Zameer Hassan | Asst. Director | Ministry of Tourism | 7772155 | zameer@maldivestourism.gov.mv |
| 25 | Cliff Jones | Director of Engineering | Sheraton Maldives | 7933484 | Cliff.jones@seraton.com |
| 26 | Mariyam Rifga | Environmental Analyst | EPA | 7629229 | Mariyam.rifga@erc.gov.mv |
| 27 | Isaac Ahmed Naseer | Admin Officer | Environmental Protection Agency | 7797858 | Ishaq.ahmed.naseer@erc.gov.mv |
| 28 | Mohamed Naseeh | S Analyst Programmer | MHTE | - | mohamed.naseeh@mhte.gov.mv |
| 29 | Ahmed Anwar | Environment Analyst | MHTE | 7995080 | Ahmed.anwar@mhte.gov.mv |

INPUTS RECEIVED FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. International Tourist Arrival during the past five years (2005 – 2009)

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 601,923 | 675,889 | 683,012 | 655,852 |

2. Five main coastal areas preferred by tourists and the major ecosystem types associated with them

| Sl no | Name | Coral reef | Mangrove | Sea grass | Sand dunes | Areas of rich biodiversity | Other specify |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mali artificial beach | | | | | | |
| 2 | Male swimming track | | | | | | |
| 3 | Kuda Bandas | | | | | | |
| 4 | K. Villingill | | | | | | |
| 5 | S. Hithadhee | | | | | | |
| 6 | Angaga Island | | | | | | |
| 7 | Kanti | | | | | | |

All beaches in Maldives are important

3. List the most important and relevant impact of tourism development in the coastal areas of the country (both positive and negative)

- Positive Impacts :-
  - Growth of GDP
  - Improvement of Infrastructure
  - Improve healthcare/social networks
  - Increase skill of people for services
  - Improve waste management systems for islands
  - Keep and preserve the house reef
  - Clean beaches and lagoons – enhanced beach quality
  - More awareness on environmental impacts
  - Shark fishing being banned

- Negative Impacts :-
  - Solid waste
  - Sewage
  - Modification of beach/shoreline
  - Loss of Marine bird habitats
  - Friction with cultural framework
  - Increase boat traffic

- Increase use of energy –fossil fuels
- Beach erosion
- Loss of vegetation line
- Detonation of house reefs as a result of beach replenishment
- Discharge of brine from desalination plants

4. List the legal and policy framework and mechanisms or measures put in place by relevant Government Institutions and the tourism industry for restricting/regulating the tourism related activities in the coastal areas for preventing environmental degradation and for enhancing the environmental values for tourism
    - The Environmental Act 4/1993 and EIA regulations plays a main role in governing major activities
    - EPA – regulates project specific impacts
    - Tourism Ministry – Regulates tourist facility/resort/hotel, tourist island development and operational standards. - The Government will not issue the resort operating licenses if the resort does not respect or do not pass the criteria set up
    - Private management by Resorts
    - Guidelines or code of conduct for specific dive sites
    - Ban on shell, turtle shell import/export – No more coral mining for building construction
    - Ban on shark fishing
    - Ban on Removal of sand/plants from uninhabited islands – sand mining lonely allowed at government approved sites
    - Different regulations under Tourist Act
    - Tourism Authority advice to have a eco-friendly operations
    - Taking coral as souvenirs is banned
    - Laws are needed to prevent fisherman mooring the boats on the reefs

5. Activities introduced o the country to minimize increased intensity of pressure from domestic tourism in coastal areas, especially during weekends and holidays.
    - No of visitors controlled by access to transport, control on local picnic area/islands
    - Male Municipality undertaken cleaning beach area in Male and set up life guards
    - No domestic tourism on resort islands – Majority of the resort islands are isolated from the local areas and controlled by individual management
    - More governing bodies and NGO participation on quality control and safe practicing on local community beaches
    - Environmental awareness programmes for school children and local communities
    - More signs and safe practices at all beaches
    - Check the quality of the water in the lagoons to determine the level of pollution
    - Few islands open for hotels
    - Male being heavily populated not having beaches for its population to dip out, goes to near by villi Male island – throwing of garbage on the beaches and lagoons

6. List of legally protected coastal and marine areas (e.g. National Parks, Biosphere Reserves, Sanctuaries etc) where tourism is presently being practiced and also give information on

the differences if any in the tourist activities practiced in these areas as compared to those in the other areas

- There are 33 protected areas out of which 28 are marine protected areas, which are most vulnerable to the impacts of developmental activities. The remaining consists of mangrove areas and island with a unique morphology.
- Protected dive sites where diving is restricted
- Hanifaer Bay under local MoU-restrictions
- Rasfari island
- Hituadhoo Etdhigali Kulhi
- South Ari Atoll where shark point
- Pine Apple Island –South of Ari Atoll
- Whale shark zone in A.DH Atoll

7. Measures proposed to be introduced for regulating coastal tourism in the next few years
    - Biosphere Reserve at Baa Atoll
    - Review of regulations on waste management
    - Complete ban on shark fishing
    - Various strategies and regulations are under draft stage and will come into action in the near future
    - International airport in the north to facilitate tourism

8. Other information related to promoting environment friendly coastal tourism
    - More education on waste management
    - Enforcement of laws and regulations
    - Technical assistance for EPA
    - More biologists and researchers
    - Coral and beach enhancement projects

PRESS COVERAGE

# National workshop on Blue Flag beach certification programme held in Dharubaaruge

## 3.4 Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources organised this workshop. The support was received from Sri Lanka Tourist Board and Tourism industry. The experts were drawn from other institutions such as coast conservation department, Department of Wild Life Conservation and NARA. The stakeholders were identified jointly by SACEP and Misty. SACEP coordinated closely to conduct this event.

The details of the workshop is given below :-

National Workshop, Colombo, Sri Lanka
11 March 2010

Organized by the Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources

Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 00 hrs | Brief outlook on the UNEP supported National workshops in South Asia Introduction on activities of SACEP/SASP Marine Environmental Conventions and Protocols in South Asia - Dr R Venkatesan, SACEP |
| 10 20 hrs | Recent Developments in Coastal Zone Management & Coastal Environmental Acts & Regulations Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources |
| 10 40 hrs | Status of Marine Environment in Sri Lanka - NARA |
| 11 00 hrs | Ecotourism Initiatives - Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority |
| 11 20 hrs | Blue Flag- An eco label for beaches - Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |
| 11 35 hrs | Case Study : Successful implementation of Blue Flag in South Africa, Ms Alison Kelly FEE South Africa |
| 12 00 hrs | Discussion on Questionnaire for Blue Flag Beach Certification |
| | Identification of Coastal Searches for Blue Flag Beach Certification |
| | Discussion on Formation of National Committee |
| | Inputs to prepare a Regional Project |
| | Any other suggestions |
| 1300-1400 hrs | National Presentations by participating institutions on the topics relevant to the Workshop |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Coastal Tourism in Sri Lanka by Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority |
| | Presentation by Tourist Hotel Association |
| | Coastal Oil Pollution Mitigation Preparedness and Safety Measures by MEPA |
| | Sea Water Quality Data along the Coast by CCD |
| | Significance of Marine Biodiversity along the Coast by IUCN |
| 1400-1500 hrs | Lunch |
| 15 00 hrs | Open for discussion feedback from participants |
| 15 30 hrs | Recommendations & Concluding remarks |

List of Participants

| | Name | Designation | Institution |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Mr. Anura Jayathilake | Director/Air Resources Mgt. & International Relations | Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources |
| 2. | Mr. Ajith de Silva | Director/Planning | |
| 3. | Mr. A. Kulatunga | Director/NRM | |
| 4. | Ms. Ruchira Perera | Environment Management Officer | |
| 5. | Ms. Tamara Amarasinghe | Project Assistant | |
| 6. | Mr. Ananda Wijesuriya | Director General | Department of Wildlife Conservation |
| 7. | Mr. S.R.B Dissanayake | Director/Research & Training | |
| 8. | Mr. K. D. D. Wijewardene | Chief Engineer | Department of Coast Conservation |
| 9. | Mr. B. Wickremarachchi | Senior Engineer | |
| 10. | Mr. Arjan Rajasuriya | Research Officer | NARA |
| 11. | Mr. Jagath Gunasekera | Assistant Operations Manager | MEPA |
| 12. | Mr. K Ranatunga | Senior Lecturer | University of Sri Jayawardenapura |
| 13. | Mr. Vimukthi Weeratunga | Head/Biodiversity | IUCN, Sri Lanka |
| 14. | Ms. Sherine Samarasooriya | National Coordinator, SGP | UNDP, Sri Lanka |
| 15. | Ms. Renuka Jayamanne | | National Chamber of Commerce |
| 16. | Mr. Samantha Kumarasena | Deputy Director | National Cleaner Production Center |
| 17. | Mr. S. Kalaiselvam | Director General | Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority |
| 18. | Mr. T. Suriyagoda | Assistant Director General | |
| 19. | Mr. K. Siriwardane | Assistant Director/Corporate Services | |
| 20. | Mr. Upali Ratnayake | Director, Community Relations & Resort Management | |
| 21. | Mr. U. Wijegunawardena | Assistant Director, Standards & Quality Assurance | |
| 22. | Mr. B. M U. D. Basnayake | Additional Secretary | Ministry of Tourism |
| 23. | Dr. R. Venkatesan | Regional Seas Co-ordinator | SACEP |
| 24. | Mr. P.Dias Abeyegunawardene | Advisor SACEP / SASP | |
| 25. | Ms. Nishanthi Perera | Programme Officer | |
| 26. | Mr. Ruchira Ranasinghe | Database Assistant | |
| 27. | Ms Alison Kelly | Consultant | FEE |

## The Workshop

The Workshop was organized by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MNR) and was held at the Conference Hall of the Ministry in Battramulla. 27 participants, including high level officials from 12 institutions were presented (See Annex 1). The workshop was inaugurated by Mr Anura Jayatilake, Director/International Affairs on behalf of the Secretary of MNR. In his opening remarks he highlighted the importance of tourism as a revenue earner and keeping it environmentally friendly for its long-term sustainability.

Next in Agenda was the presentation by Dr R. Venkatesan, SASP Coordinator, who talked about the role of SACEP in coastal and marine resources management in South Asia and the assistance provided by UNEP in taking these activities forward.

Mr Arjan Rajasuriya of NARA in his presentation on "Marine Environment of Sri Lanka" stated that the marine and coastal habitats are linked to one another and as they are very sensitive if disturbed may take years to recover. He also pointed that lack of synergy and overlapping responsibilities amongst management organizations are hampering the sustainable management of the resource base.

A presentation on Ecotourism Initiatives was done by Mr P. U. Rathnayake, Director/Domestic Tourism form the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. He stated that ecotourism activities in the country went beyond beaches and presently culture, nature and adventure tourism activities were also being included. He pointed out that compared to other South Asian countries Sri Lanka had allocated larger part of its land area (14%) as protected. He further stated the importance of working with the Environment Ministry in developing an environment tourism policy, promotion of green certifications, and formulation of ecotourism criteria for registration.

Next to take the floor was Ms Alison Kelly of FEE, who gave an introduction to the Blue Flag Beach Certification programme and her experience in implementing the initiative within South African beaches. This lead to a lengthy discussion as this initiative was a novel approach to address environmental concerns as well as safety issues in coastal tourism.

Mr Bandula Wickramaarahchi, Deputy Head of the Coast Conservation Department (CCD) talked about the Coastal water quality. In his speech he highlighted the role and responsibilities of CCD under the Coast Conservation Act to keep the beaches pollution free. Mr Wickramaarchchi stated that under the Coastal Water Quality Management Programme, the CCD is monitoring water quality in selected basins including Mt Lavinia, Hikkaduwa, Unawatuna, Arugambay and Polhenea, all of which are popular tourist destinations.

The Assistant Manager of the Marine Environmental Pollution Agency, Mr J.M Gunasekera in this presentation talked about the Coastal Oil Pollution Mitigation Preparedness and Safety Measures, while Mr Vimukthi Weeratunga, of IUCN Sri Lanka office made a presentation on Coastal Biodiversity as Tourist Attractions.

The Additional Director General of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Mr Tissa Suriyagoda made a presentation on coastal tourism in Sri Lanka. He stated that the majority of countries tourist product are presently located within the coastal belt and the post-war conditions

has also opened up areas such as Nilaweli, Kalpitiya, Arugambay and Passikuda for tourism activities. Mr Suriyagoda also talked about the Kalpitiya Integrated Resource Project, which is the biggest tourism development activity to be implemented, where new exclusive tourism destination within South Asia will be established. He said that one of the unique features of Kalpitiya is that it is one of the most beautiful coastal areas in the North Western Province and it is not polluted and the Ministry intended to keep it that way. He further added the importance of getting the community involved as one objective of this development activity is to share benefits with them.

After the presentations the floor was open for discussions in taking the Blue Flag Initiative foreword within the country. At the same time the participants were requited to fill in the questioner prepared by SACEP.

## The way forward

All the participants were in agreement of the importance of implementing an eco-labeling imitative such as the Blue Flag Programme, as the country is now geared to promote tourism as one of the most important economic activity as well as new beach areas were now being opened up for tourism after more than 30 years of civil conflict. It was decided that a coordinating committee should be appointed and in this regard the Ministry of Environment and the Tourism Development Authority should work in close collaboration.

***The beaches identified to start this programme are Mt Lavinia, Hikkaduwa, Negambo, Nilaweli and Arugambay***

## INPUTS RECEIVED FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. International Tourist Arrivals during the past five years (205-2009)

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 549,308 | 559,603 | 494,008 | 438,475 | |

2. Five main coastal areas preferred by tourists and the major ecosystem types associated with them

| | | Coral reef | Mangrove | Sea grass | Sand dunes | Areas of rich biodiversity | Other specify |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hikkaduwa | | | | | | |
| 2 | Polhena | | | | | | |
| 3 | Negambo | | | | | | |
| 4 | Nilaweli | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Kalpitiya | | | | | | Marine mammals |
| 6 | Unawatuna | | | | | | |
| 7 | Arugam Bay | | | | | | |
| 8 | Mount Lavinia | | | | | | |
| 9 | Passi Kudha | | | | | | |
| 10 | Yala National Park | | | | | | |
| 11 | Bentota/Rekawa | | | | | | Turtle nesting |
| 12 | Beruwela | | | | | | |
| 13 | Bundala National Park | | | | | | |

3. List the most important and relevant impacts of tourism development in the coastal areas of the country (both positive and negative)

- Positive Impacts :-

  - Employment Opportunities and Livelihood improvements
  - Infrastructure and local facility development (e.g. better means of obtaining facilities such as clean water)
  - Increase foreign exchange earnings

- Negative Impacts : -

  - Coastal habitat destruction
  - Cultural invasion and damage to social life
  - Increased solid waste issues – too much garbage on the beaches
  - Coastal erosion
  - More pollution –sewage
  - Threat of getting more invasive species
  - Unplanned development
  - Lead to lack of access of some beach stretches to local communities

4. List the legal and policy framework and mechanisms or measures put in place by relevant Government Institutions and the tourism industry for restricting/regulating the tourism related activities in the coastal areas for preventing environmental degradation and for enhancing the environmental values for tourism

- Coast Conservation Act
- National Environment Act
- Fauna and Flora Protection Act
- Marine Pollution Prevention Act
- Urban Development Authority Act
- Sri Lanka Tourism Board Act
- Fisheries Act

- Local Authorities
- Municipalities

5. Activities introduced in the country to minimize increased intensity of pressure from domestic tourism in coastal areas, especially during weekends and holidays. Please spell out the activities if any, introduced to minimize these impacts locally

    - Visitor charges
    - Establish relevant infrastructure –Garbage disposal
    - Divert local tourist into less used coastal stretches (open other potential beaches)
    - Awareness programmes – through TV commercials

6. List of legally protected coastal and marine areas (e.g. National Parks, Biosphere Reserves, Sanctuaries etc) where tourism is presently being practiced and also give information on the differences if any in the tourist activities practiced in these areas as compared to those in the other areas

    - National parks – Yala, Bundala, Wilpattu, Kumana, Hikkaduwa, Pigeon Island
    - Sanctuaries – Rumassala, Rekawa, Madu Ganga, Bar reef, Kalamatiya
    - Biosphere Reserves – Bundala MAB
    - UNESCO –WH – Galle Fort

7. Measures proposed to be introduced for regulating coastal tourism in the next few years

    Declaration of tourist development area under Tourism Act (e.g Kalpitiya)

8. Other information related to promoting environment friendly coastal tourism

    - Do more research and investigations as well as continuous monitoring
    - Law enforcement activities should be strictly essential to promote the environmental friendly coastal tourism
    - IUCN can provide technical assistance in developing ecological foot print of selected coastal stretches in Sri Lanka

# 4. Documents Distributed at the National Workshops

## Preparation for the Workshop

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) with the assured financial support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), communicated to South Asian Seas (SAS) member countries regarding the Blue Flag Initiative and a Concept Note and Mission Flyer was prepared with a tentative schedule and was sent to National Focal Points. Also Communication was established with an expert from the Foundation for Environment Education (FEE) to visit South Asia. Simultaneously efforts were made to bring in UN World Tourism Organization (UN-WTO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to be part of this activity.

Subsequently SACEP with the approval of the member countries organised National Workshops within a short period of time. It is hereby placed on record that SAS member countries extended their support to our request and showed interest to organize these workshops even though the time available was short. The Concept Note and the Mission flyer are given below here.

## Concept Note

Blue Flag - Beach Certification Scheme for South Asia Seas Region
A Clean Beach – A Tourist Haven

***Background:***

Recreation, when properly planned and managed, can minimize impacts on coastal environments and serve as a driving force in bringing sustainable tourism as a vehicle of development to local communities and destinations. Tourism and recreation associated with "sea and sun", is recognized as an essential component of domestic and international trade and a major contributor to economic growth.

The costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism will lead to the loss of traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality, and the natural resource base. However the planned management of the above ultimately supports tourism.

Businesses and Governments are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward with the attempt of being more responsive to current market, environment and community requirements. Adoption of voluntary initiatives such as Environmental Guidelines, Codes of Conduct and Certification Schemes encourage commitment towards conservation. In light of the above the beach certification scheme "Blue Flag Programme" is initiated.

***Salient Features:***

1. This is a new initiative to protect, conserve and restore Coastal Environment and to promote sustainable tourism with public - private partnership. It is well known that the oceans are essential to food security and the health and survival of all life, power our climate and are a critical part of the biosphere.
2. The Blue Flag is a voluntary exercise and certification is awarded by Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) Denmark. This exclusive eco-label is awarded to more than 3200 beaches and marinas in 38 countries worldwide.
3. The 38 countries have fully implemented the Blue Flag Programme: Bahamas, Belgium-Flanders, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey and Wales. Aruba, Brazil, Chile and Malta are currently running the Programme in the pilot phase

Beach Criteria and Marina Criteria has four categories :

- *Environmental Education and Information*
- *Water Quality*
- *Environmental Management*
- *Safety & Services*

4. The last 20 years experiences gained in Europe and the recent experiences of non-European countries clearly show the vast improvement of the quality of the coastal environment with the implementation of Blue Flag Programme. It is also witnessed by the increased number of tourists visited these beaches.
5. Under this initiative, SACEP/SASP organized a mini workshop on World Ocean Day on 8 June 2009 with the support of Sri Lanka Tourist Board in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The message was well received by officials of Sri Lanka Tourist Board on the importance of protection and conservation of Marine Environment. SACEP presented efforts taken by Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) Denmark, with their Flagship Programme on Blue Flag to certify beaches.
6. Under the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP, this Blue Flag certification was successfully undertaken in Caribbean Island countries. SACEP would like to extend this information to the South Asian Seas member countries namely Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

7. The five maritime countries of South Asia are endeavored with coastal and marine resource which has enormous potential to develop sustainable tourism industry. SACEP sincerely believes that by implementation of the Blue Flag programme in the South Asian Seas region would bring immense benefits to the member countries as it will attract more tourists and contribute to betterment of the coastal environment.
8. SACEP/SASP would like to seek the support of member countries to organize a meeting of Stakeholders with Tourism Industry participation to promote this scheme where in SACEP/SASP.
9. It is required that Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) has to present the Blue Flag certification process to the Member Countries of the South Asian Region and funding support for this purpose has to be initiated.

This is an effort to bring Tourism Industry towards Marine Environmental Management through Economic Benefits.

The Proposed Concept Note on Blue Flag - Beach Certification Scheme for South Asia Seas Region is placed before the member countries for concurrence.

# Mission Flyer

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
SOUTH ASIAN SEAS PROGRAMME
Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme
Project funded by UNEP, Nairobi

Supported by Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Denmark
Partner: UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Regional Office - Asia Pacific, Japan

A delegation comprising of Dr. R. Venkatesan, SASP Co-coordinator of SACEP and Ms. Alison Kelly, Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Denmark would be visiting SAS member countries to promote the idea of beach certification and to involve Tourism Ministry and Tourism Industry towards Protection and Conservation of Marine Environment.

Background and Rationale

The five maritime countries of South Asia, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are endeavoured with coastal and marine resources which have enormous potential to develop sustainable tourism industry. The costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism not only involves economic loss to the industry but also leads to the loss of traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality, and the natural resource base. It is understood that maintenance of healthy environment, clean and safety beaches are essential factors for the sustainability of the tourism industry. Governments as well as businesses are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward with the attempt of being more responsive to environment and community requirements. In this regard the beach certification system has been successfully used in the other parts of the world as one of the management tools.

In light of the above, the application of a beach certification scheme "Blue Flag Programme" which is a voluntary eco-label Programme designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices as well as safety among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management is highly practical in promoting sustainable coastal tourism in the region. The presence of the Blue Flag indicates to the beach user not only that the beach is clean and safe but also that environmental education programmes and information are in place and is available to the general public. Presently the Blue Flag certification is being implemented in Caribbean island countries in association with the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme. It is also practiced in European beaches. The Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation consisting of national member organizations representing 59 countries in Europe, Africa, Oceania, Asia, North America and South America and initiated the Blue Flag Programme in 1988.

The South Asian Seas Programme functions as the regional node for GPA programming activities for South Asia and has engaged in facilitating activities to achieve the objectives minimizing land-based pollution in its member countries. The regional, as well as national work on GPA has recommended the importance of introducing economic instruments such as "eco labelling" to mitigate coastal and marine pollution. Therefore, introducing the Blue Flag Programme to the SAS region could be ideal,

wherein marine environmental issues on land based sources of pollution are addressed with support of different stakeholders to promote sustainable tourism in the region.

It is proposed to organize national meetings with all stakeholders including Ministries of Environment, Fisheries, Shipping and Tourism and other agencies related to Tourism industry including NGOs.

Following the national level meeting proposed under this project, countries are expected to follow UNEP/UNWTO/FEE publication Awards for Improving the Coastal Environment: the Example of the Blue Flag. This proven methodology has five steps for starting the Blue Flag Programme such as:

Conduct a National Blue Flag Workshop; Establish a National Blue Flag Committee; Initiate a Blue Flag Feasibility Study; Review the criteria; and carry out a Blue Flag Pilot Phase.

A successful Blue Flag Programme could be supported by national policies and frameworks on safety, water quality, environmental education, waste management, tourism, recreation, coastal zone management and others. A Feasibility Study questionnaire will be developed to assist countries in the collection of information to determine whether the necessary elements to support theestablishment of a Blue Flag programme are in place.

Programme Objectives

The key objective of the present project is to initiate a national dialogue and to develop a regional project to pilot test the Blue Flag Programme for selected coastal stretches in the region.

Purpose of National Meeting / Workshop

A delegation from SACEP Secretariat and FEE shall visit SAS member countries to assist the member countries on the adoption of voluntary initiatives such as Environmental Guidelines, Codes of Conduct and Certification Schemes of the Blue Flag Programme. SACEP/SASP requests SAS member countries to organize a meeting/workshop with relevant stakeholders to promote this idea of beach certification. All relevant national stakeholders are to be invited. The workshop will provide a platform to further develop a national programme of action for the Blue Flag Programme in each country.

The following activities will be undertaken in each workshop:

1. Introduce and discuss the importance of adopting Blue Flag Programme for sustainable coastal tourism towards conservation and management of marine environment.

2. Establish a co-coordinating arrangement (National Blue Flag Committee) with key stakeholder participation (Government, private sector, local government etc). Identify priority coastal stretches to pilot test the programme.

3. Develop a work plan to pilot test the national level initiative.

Expected Results/Outputs

- Expert participation in national workshop will increase the understanding amongst countries of relevance of the benefits of implementing the Blue Flag Programme for sustainable coastal tourism towards conservation and management of marine environment;
- Establishment of a National Blue Flag Committee in each country; Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka;
- Within two months of the national workshop, each country will undertake a feasibility study and develop a project proposal for their priority coastal stretches, which will be forwarded to the SACEP Secretariat.
- A regional project will be developed based on the proposals received and other information compiled at the national workshops. After obtaining the necessary approval from the member governments, SACEP/SASP, with the assistance of UNEP, shall approach donors for implementing the regional project.

Tentative Schedule to organize National Workshops by SAS Member Countries

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| India | 23-24 February 2010 | Goa |
| Maldives | 27-28 February 2010 | Male |
| Bangladesh | 3 - 4 March 2010 | Dhaka |
| Pakistan | 8 - 9 March 2010 | Karachi |
| Sri Lanka | 11-12 March 2010 | Colombo |

## A CLEAN BEACH - A TOURIST HEAVAN
## Eco-labeling South Asia's Beaches and Marinas for Sustainable Tourism Development

***Rationale***

The five maritime countries of South Asia are endeavored with a rich heritage in its coastal and marine resource base that has enormous potential for promoting tourism. Presently, tourism and recreation associated with "sea and sun", is recognized as an essential component of domestic and international trade and is a major contributor to economic growth in the region, especially in the island states of Maldives and Sri Lanka and specific coastal stretches of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

The costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism not only involves economic loss to the industry but also leads to the loss of traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality, and the natural resource base, which the industry depends upon.

***Response***

Governments as well as businesses are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward with the attempt of being more responsive to environment and community requirements. In light of the above, the application of economic instruments such as 'eco labeling' to mitigate coastal and marine pollution is desirable. Therefore, the key objective of the present project is to initiate a national dialogue and to develop a regional project to pilot test the 'Blue Flag Programme' for selected coastal stretches in the region.

***What is the Blue Flag Programme***

The Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label, promoting sustainable development at beaches and marinas through adhering to strict criteria dealing with:

- *Environmental information and education,*
- *Water quality,*
- *Safety and services and*
- *Environmental management.*

The Blue Flag is awarded on the recommendation of an international Jury composed of representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International Lifesaving Federation (ILS), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), an international environmental education expert, the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) and the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

Presently it is awarded to over 3450 beaches and marinas in 41 countries across Europe, South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, New Zealand, Brazil, Canada and the Caribbean.

The programme is run by the Foundation for Environmental Education, a non profit non governmental organisation consisting of national member organisations representing 59 countries. Current information about participating countries and awarded sites can be found on the website www.blueflag.org.

***Planned Activities***

SASP/SACEP and FEE International Secretariat in association with the National Focal Points will organize five one day national workshops to have discussions with stakeholders in member countries to propagate the idea of beach certification.



The workshops will provide a platform to further develop a national programme through undertaking the following activities:

1. Discuss national membership with FEE
2. Introduce and discuss the importance of adopting Blue Flag Programme for sustainable coastal tourism leading towards conservation and management of marine environment.
3. Establish a co-ordinating arrangement (National Blue Flag Committee) with key stakeholder participation (Government, private sector, local government etc).
4. Identify priority stretches of coast to pilot test the programme.
5. Develop a work plan to pilot test the national level initiative.

SACEP

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
No. 10, Anderson Road, Colombo 05 ,
Sri Lanka.
Tel : +94 11 2589787, Fax : +94 11 2589369
web : http://www.sacep.org

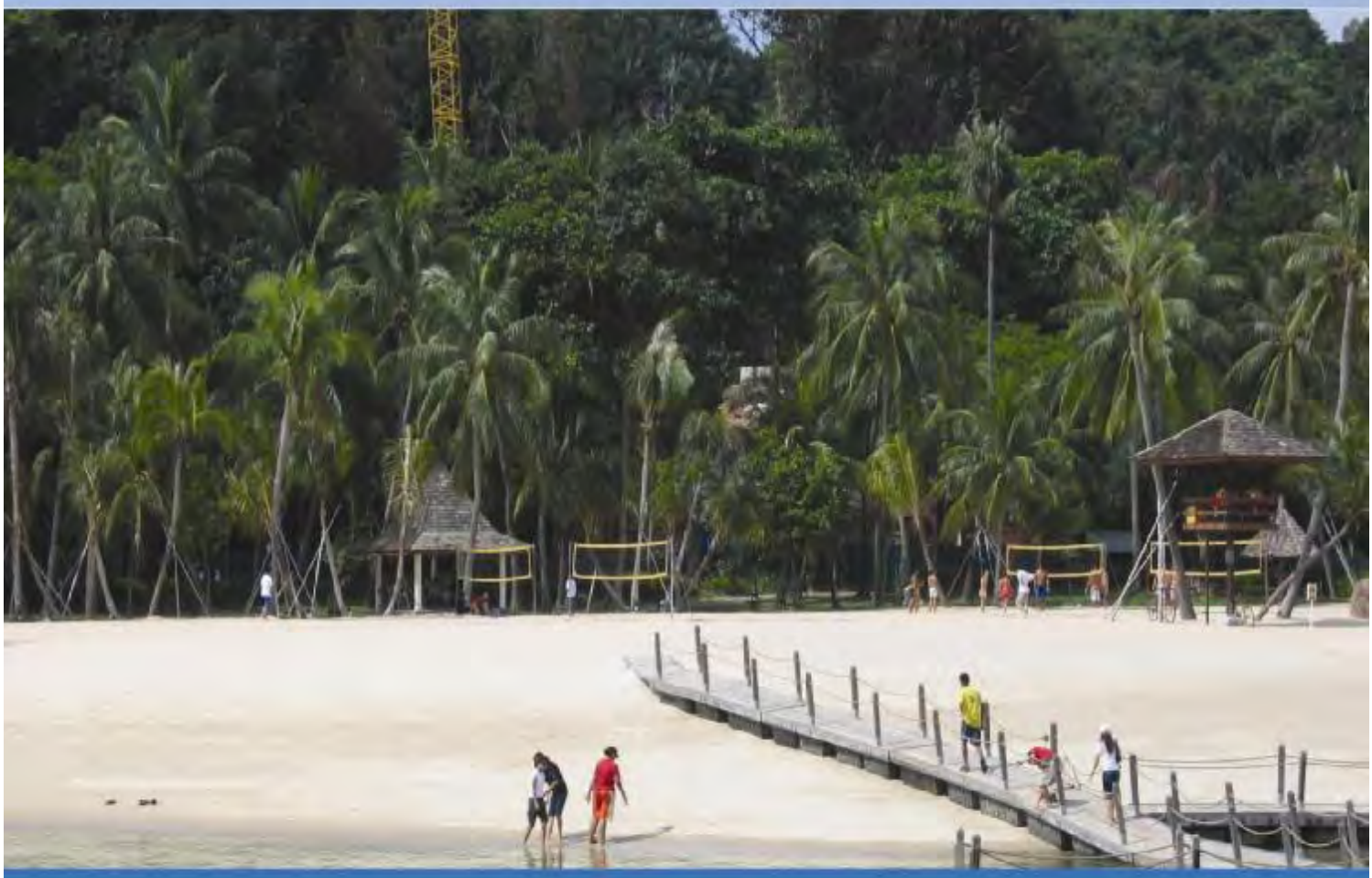
## A CLEAN BEACH - A TOURIST HEAVAN

## Eco-labeling South Asia's Beaches and Marinas for Sustainable Tourism Development

SAS SACEP UNEP UNWTO FEE

# The National Blue Flag Workshops in South Asia
# March 2010

Blue flag, an eco-label for beaches



A programme of The Foundation for Environmental Education
in Collaborations with SACEP, UNEP and
Government of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri lanka

FEE SACEP SAS UNEP

# The Blue Flag Programme

History and Development

The Blue Flag Programme is a voluntary eco-label for beaches and marinas. The programme is run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non profit non governmental organisation with member organisations in 59 countries. The Blue Flag Programme started in Europe in 1987 with the purpose of encouraging beaches to comply with the EU Bathing Water Directive. The Programme criteria have since developed to address a wide range of issues and the number of participating countries and number of beaches and marinas receiving the award has increased yearly.

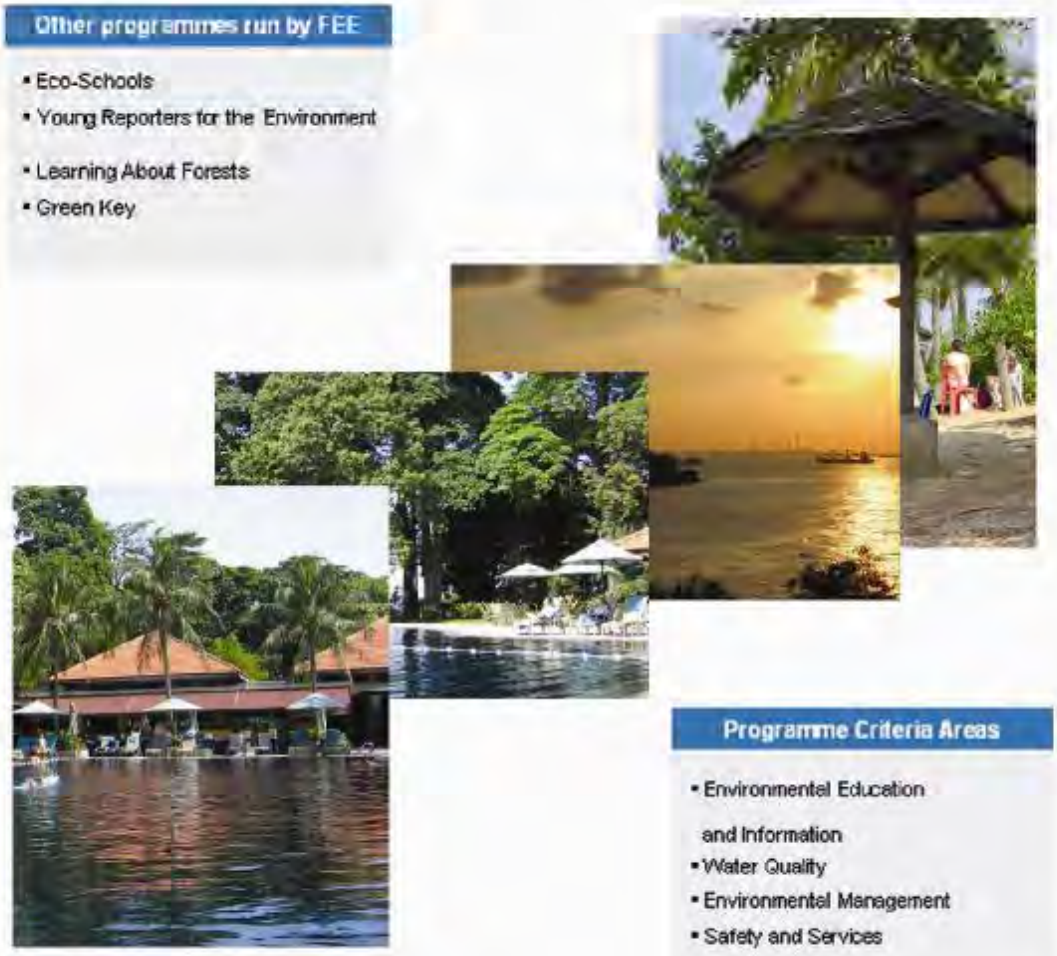
The Blue Flag is given to beaches and marinas that meet a specific set of criteria concerning environmental information and education, water quality, safety and services and environmental management. It has become a symbol of quality recognised by tourists and tour operators and can be used for the promotion of the awarded beach or marina.

The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management and staff. The programme criteria are also designed to work with the national, regional and local legislation of each country, thereby assuring that the legislation is being followed. It can also be used to set a benchmark higher than what already exists.

As of 2009 there were over 3450 sites awarded with the Blue Flag in 41 countries including countries in Europe, in the Caribbean, Morocco, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. Current information about participating countries and awarded sites can be found on the website: www.blueflag.org.

**Other programmes run by FEE**

- Eco-Schools
- Young Reporters for the Environment
- Learning About Forests
- Green Key



**Programme Criteria Areas**

- Environmental Education and Information
- Water Quality
- Environmental Management
- Safety and Services

# Blue Flag in a New Country

**Getting Started**

To establish the Blue Flag Programme in a new country a nationally active non-profit, non-governmental organisation must first become a member of the Foundation for Environmental Education. The organisation will be the national representative and responsible body for FEE in that country. This NGO should have environmental education as one of its aims, have the necessary resources available to run the programme, and meet other criteria set by FEE. Please check the membership requirements here:

http://www.fee-international.org/en/menu/membership

**The Application Process**

Interested organisations should contact the FEE secretariat and apply for associate membership. In the application they must demonstrate their capabilities and how they plan to run the Blue Flag Programme. They must also present a plan for how they will, within three years of becoming members, start running a second FEE programme. The new FEE member organisation will be assigned a mentor to instruct them through the first few years.

**Developing the Blue Flag Programme**

At the start of the Blue Flag Programme, a national information workshop must be held. Also a National Blue Flag Committee must be established, consisting of representatives from the national water, tourism, education and environmental authorities. Other relevant experts and interest groups such as beach/marina associations and recreational groups should also be a part of the committee. The National Blue Flag Committee will review the international criteria and identify how they fit with their local legislation and situation. They will then choose one or more beaches or marinas to become the first Blue Flag pilot sites. These first pilot sites will serve as learning opportunities and examples for other beaches and marinas in the country. Once the pilot sites have successfully completed a season and they show to be in full compliance with the Blue Flag criteria, they can apply for the full Blue Flag status.

# Application Procedure

**Initial Contact**

Beaches and marinas which would like to apply for the Blue Flag award should first contact their national FEE organisation's Blue Flag operator. The national operators provide interested parties with the national Blue Flag application form and procedural instructions. A pre-application review of the applicant is sometimes done to help identify problem areas that could be improved.

**The Selection Process**

The National Jury meets once a year to review the candidates from that country and to decide if they are in compliance with all of the Blue Flag criteria. Approved candidates are then forwarded to the International Jury. The International Blue Flag Jury meets twice a year to review candidates from different areas of the world. Once the candidates have been accepted by the International Jury they are awarded with the Blue Flag for one season.

**Control Visits**

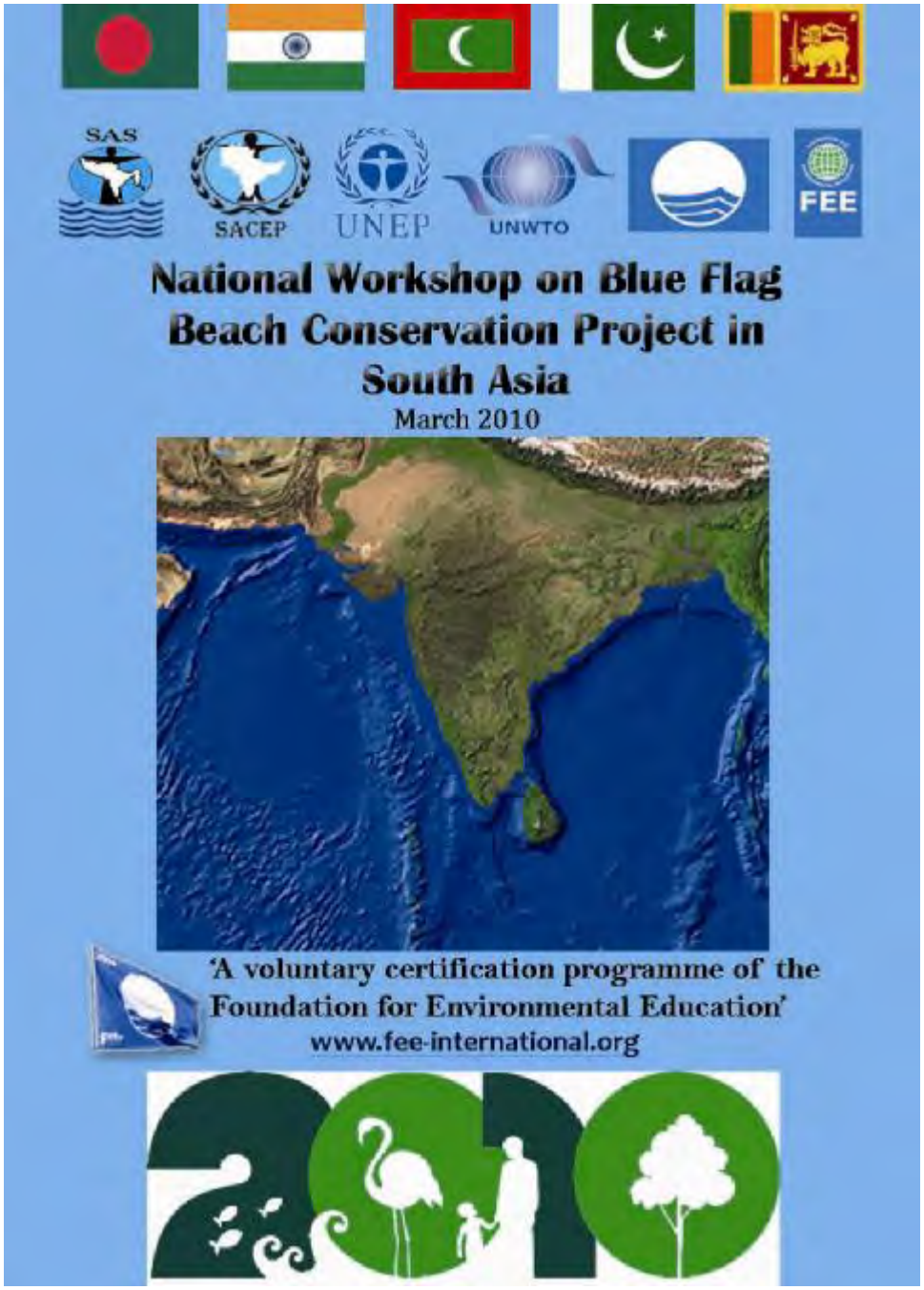
Control visits are made during the Blue Flag season by both national and international controllers to assure that all criteria are being met. If problems are found the flag is withdrawn until they are fixed. If the problem is very serious or if the problem is not fixed within a given period of time, the flag is withdrawn for the rest of the season. The public is also encouraged to report any problems about Blue Flag beaches and marinas to the national and international Blue Flag contacts.

## Blue Flag Partners

| | |
|---|---|
| European Union | www.europa.eu.int |
| European Union for Coastal Conservation (EUCC) | www.eucc.net |
| International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) | www.icomia.org |
| International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) | www.ilsf.org |
| Reef Check | www.reefscheck.org |
| United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) | www.unep.org |
| The World Conservation Union (IUCN) | www.iucn.org |
| World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) | www.world-tourism.org |

www.blueflag.org
www.fee-international.org

Workshop Schedule
Dhaka Bangledesh 3 - 4 March 2010
Malé Maldives 6 - 7 March 2010
Goa India 8 - 9 March 2010
Colombo Sri Lanka 11 - 12 March 2010
Karachi Pakistan 23 - 24 March 2010
A CLEAN BEACH - A TOURIST HEAVAN
Effort to protect, conserve and restore the Coastal Environment through sustainable tourism with Public - Private Partnership
South Asian Seas Programme of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
in association with
Governments of Bangladesh,India, Maldives,Pakistan and Sri Lanka
United Nations Environment Programme
United Nations World Tourism Organisation
Foundation of Environmental Education
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
No. 10, Anderson Road , Colombo 05, Sri Lanka. Tel : +94 11 2589787, Fax : +94 11 2589369


SAS
SACEP
UNEP
UNWTO
FEE
National Workshop on Blue Flag Beach Conservation Project in South Asia
March 2010
'A voluntary certification programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education'
www.fee-international.org

# Starting the Blue Flag Programme and the Feasibility Study Questionnaire

## A. Introduction

This document has been prepared as a practical guide for starting the Blue Flag programme in a new country. Here you will find the steps for implementation outlined and a copy of the Feasibility Study questionnaire attached.

This document is to be used by the group or person responsible for driving the implementation process. Please note that by the time the Pilot Phase has been reached, the programme should be nationally managed by a non-profit, non-governmental organisation which has become a member of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

FEE and the International Blue Flag Coordination will give assistance throughout the implementation process. Please feel free to contact them with any questions.

Interested parties are strongly recommended to read the UNEP/UNWTO/FEE publication, “Awards for Improving the Coastal Environment: The example of the Blue Flag”. This can be downloaded from the Blue Flag website. Here you can find a further description of the programme, how to start in a new country and some very valuable and important information about the roles of all the different actors in the process.

## B. The five steps to starting the Blue Flag Programme

Here are the five main steps for starting the Blue Flag programme:

- Conduct a national Blue Flag Workshop
- Establish a National Blue Flag Committee
- Initiate a Blue Flag Feasibility Study
- Review the criteria
- Carry out a Blue Flag Pilot Phase

**1. Conduct a national Blue Flag workshop:**
This will introduce the Blue Flag programme to a wide and representative range of national and regional stakeholders, presenting to them the process, discussing with them the procedures for adhesion and the Feasibility Study. Often the participants from the workshops become part of the National Blue Flag Committee.

**2. Establish a National Blue Flag Committee:**
A successful national Blue Flag programme involves many different partners relevant to the programme because of their specific expertise, policy area and their role in its implementation.

The Committee, together with the national coordinating body or person, will oversee the establishment of the programme, from its onset to implementation, and define a strategy or plan for implementing the Blue Flag programme, including the production of the feasibility study, training, investment programs, information exchange and monitoring of progress.

The National Blue Flag Committee should be comprised of multiple stakeholders representing different interests and expertise. The composition of the Blue Flag National Committee might include the following stakeholders among others. It is often these same representatives that become part of the National Blue Flag Jury once the programme is fully running:

- National water quality authorities
- National authorities in charge of national policies on Coastal Zone Management and nature protection
- National tourism authorities
- National safety boards
- National associations of local authorities and interests
- Non-governmental organisations representing environmental interests, cultural interests, and environmental education
- National representative of the tourism trade
- National consumers' association
- Other non-governmental and special interest groups
- Other experts with marine issues, education, tourism, management and policy

**3. Initiate a Blue Flag Feasibility Study:**
This study addresses the readiness of a new country to establish the programme. In essence this phase addresses these questions:

- Is the programme needed?
- Do those involved welcome the programme?
- Is there enough human, technological and institutional capacity for the programme to exist?
- What are the existing policies and how do they fit into the Blue Flag programme?

The Feasibility Study is carried out by the National Blue Flag Committee and the person or body responsible for the start-up phase of the programme with the assistance of FEE and the International Blue Flag Coordination. A country visit is conducted to fill the information gaps of the study and to meet with relevant stakeholders. The feasibility study highlights which capacity gaps need to be filled in order to be able to launch the programme.

You will find a copy of the Feasibility Study questionnaire at the end of this document. This questionnaire should be filled out and given to the International Blue Flag Coordination. It will need to be approved by the International Blue Flag Jury.

**4. Review the criteria:**
Based on the evaluation of the Feasibility Study, the National Committee and the International Blue Flag Coordination will investigate how the international criteria can be applied to reflect the countries´ environmental, social and economic conditions; human and technical capacity; and institutional framework. Any additions/adaptations to the international criteria should be attainable, capable of being monitored and controlled, viable of being implemented and represent an improvement with respect to the status quo. FEE is in charge of approving regional adaptations to the criteria.

**5. Carry out a Blue Flag Pilot Phase:**
A few sites are selected to become Blue Flag Pilot beaches or marinas. These will serve as the platform for testing the programme and the basis for filling gaps as needed. It is also a platform for upgrading the new beaches/marinas to Blue Flag standards.

These first locations will later serve as models for other locations wanting to participate in the Blue Flag programme. Therefore, it is essential to select a set of locations representing the spectrum of situations that will later be encountered, both with respect to the physical environment and tourism use, and those of a different capacity and institutional character.

## C. Blue Flag and National, Regional and Local Legislation

A successful Blue Flag programme is supported by national, local as well as regional policies and frameworks on safety, water quality, environmental education, waste management, tourism, recreation, coastal zone management and others. When used in cooperation, the Blue Flag programme can be a tool for their effective implementation and monitoring.

The initial Feasibility Study must address whether the existing policies, frameworks and their implementation can meet the demands of a national programme and how in reverse, the programme supports the implementation of existing policies and frameworks.

If there are no such frameworks or policies, or they are identified as insufficient in aims, capacity and function, it must be considered how a Blue Flag "Policy" or "Programme" could be implemented through a combination of local, regional and national responsibilities.

This focus on policies and frameworks could give the impression that the Blue Flag programme only works "top-down" and must have very specific national authorities in the lead; pushing local interests to act in certain ways through national regulations or codes. The programme however, uses a combination of "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches.

Local voluntary action under the programme can promote improvements in the capacity and services of institutions above the local level, by placing demands for policies, support and infrastructure at regional or national levels.

In countries with a large degree of decentralisation, national institutions and policies may not be as much of a deciding factor for a Blue Flag programme as in countries with stronger national authorities. If that is the case, the national Blue Flag programme must rely more on local and regional capacities for environmental management than on national authorities and their policies and regulations.

## D. Feasibility Study

A Feasibility Study questionnaire was developed to assist countries in the collection of information to determine whether the necessary elements to support the establishment of a Blue Flag programme are in place.

The questionnaire also helps compile information on the institutional and legal framework, on the human and technological capacity and other issues from the point of view of: threats to the environment, water quality, environmental management, human health and safety, environmental education and social, cultural and economic issues.

You may attach additional documents, papers, publications, press releases and brochures.

You may add additional sheets for any issue on which you wish to expand.

**For any technical questions, please contact:**

**Mr Finn Bolding Thomsen or Sophie Bachet**
**Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**
**International Blue Flag Co-ordination**
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**Tel (direct): +45 3379 0410**
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**Email: coordination@blueflag.org**

# Blue Flag Feasibility Study Questionnaire: Country Profile

| **Country:** |
| --- |
| |

Your name: ……..
Position: ……..
Authority: ……..

Date: ……..
Place: ……..

Signature: ……..

## Blue Flag Feasibility Study Questionnaire: Country Profile

Table of contents:

1. The coastal areas
2. The regulatory framework as it relates to the coastal area
3. The institutional framework
4. Monitoring and assessment
5. Improving in-country capacity
6. Raising awareness and voluntary initiatives
7. The other stakeholders
8. Regional cooperation
9. Comments and feedback

# BLUE FLAG FEASIBILITY STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

## 1. THE COASTAL AREAS:

**1.1. Which activities take place in the coastal areas?**

(tick all the relevant options).

| | |
|---|---|
| Bathing | □ |
| Pleasure boating | □ |
| Snorkelling | □ |
| Reef walking | □ |
| Scuba diving | □ |
| Jet skiing | □ |
| Hotels | □ |
| Restaurants | □ |
| Housing/residential activities | □ |
| Vending | □ |
| Fishing | □ |
| Shrimp farming/ Fry catching | □ |
| Mining | □ |
| Industries | □ |
| Agriculture | □ |
| Ports | □ |
| Military activities | □ |

Others:

| |
|---|
| |

**1.2. Conflicts between these activities exist:** yes no

1.2.1 If yes, please provide examples:

| |
|---|
| |

**1.3. Coastal tourism is developed in your country:** yes no

1.3.1. If yes, please indicate what kind of tourism is predominant in the coastal area (international vs. national, one-day tripper, backpackers, package holiday tourists, nature tourists etc.):

**1.4. Please give a profile of the beach types and numbers in your country:** (what percentages are urban or in natural settings, describe the level of infrastructure, how much tourism activity etc.)

1.4.1. Which are the beaches most heavily developed for tourism activities? Please name the beaches and the location. If possible assess their status (using the following scale: unsatisfactory, marginal, good, excellent).

**1.5. Please give a profile of the marina types and numbers in your country:** (what percentage are private or commercial, small or large etc.)

1.5.1. Which are the marinas most likely to be able to participate in the programme? Please name the marinas and their location. If possible assess their status (using the following scale: unsatisfactory, marginal, good, excellent).

**1.6. What are the issues of concern in the coastal areas, from the point of view of:**

1.6.1. Threats to the environment:

1.6.2. Water quality (in relation both to bathing and drinking water):

1.6.3. Environmental management:

1.6.4. Human health and safety:

1.6.5. Environmental education and information

1.6.6. Social, cultural and economic issues

## 2. THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AS IT RELATES TO THE COASTAL AREA

**2. 1. Effluent discharge standards exist for:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Discharge of domestic sewage | yes | no |
| Industrial waste | yes | no |

**2. 2. Connection to sewerage systems is obligatory for:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| households | yes | no |
| commercial buildings | yes | no |

2.2.1. If no, is on-site treatment obligatory?

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | no |

2.2.2. If on-site treatment is obligatory, which level of treatment is required?

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary | □ |
| Secondary | □ |
| Tertiary | □ |

2.2.3. What systems for treatment are generally used? (tick all the relevant options)

| | |
|---|---|
| Stabilization ponds | □ |
| Constructed wetlands | □ |
| Sewage treatment plants | □ |
| Activated sludge | □ |
| Septic systems | □ |
| Other | □ |

Please describe:

| |
|---|
| |

2.2.4. What percentage of sewage plants function adequately?

| | |
|---|---|
| 0-10% | □ |
| 10-25% | □ |
| 25-50% | □ |
| 50-75% | □ |
| >75% | □ |

2.2.5. What are the receiving systems for sewage effluent?

| | |
|---|---|
| Soil | □ |
| Stream | □ |
| Ocean | □ |

**2.3. Bathing water quality standards have been set:** yes no

If yes, please attach the standards.

2.3.1. If yes, they are set at the:

| | |
|---|---|
| National level | □ |
| Local level | □ |

2.3.2. If yes, monitoring is conducted by:

| | |
|---|---|
| A national authority | □ |
| A local authority | □ |

**2.4. Fresh water**

2.4.1. Information on fresh water consumption by the tourist industry is available: yes no

2.4.2. Information on fresh water supplies is available: yes no

2.4.3. Water saving programmes have been launched: yes no

**2.5. Regulations for the management of urban solid waste have been set:** yes no

2.5.1. If yes, do they call for recycling programmes? yes no

Please describe the recycling programme, what materials are collected and by what means (curb side, recycling stations etc.):

| |
|---|
| |

2.5.2. If yes, do they foresee fines for littering? yes no

**2.6. Regulations for the disposal for hazardous waste and oils has been set:** yes no

If yes, please describe what the regulations are and for what wastes:

| |
|---|
| |

**2.7. Special norms have been set to protect wildlife from souvenirs' collectors and/or from other recreational activities:** yes no

2.7.1. If yes, these address: (tick all the relevant options)

| | |
|---|---|
| Sea turtles | □ |
| Dugongs | □ |
| Sea horses | □ |
| Sharks | □ |
| Corals | □ |
| Shells | □ |
| Birds | □ |
| Others: | |

| |
|---|
| |

**2.8. Noise pollution standards have been set:** yes no

**2.9. Air pollution standards have been set:** yes no

2.9.1. If yes, do they include specific requirements for vehicles emissions?
yes no

**2.10. Mining activities (on sand dunes and coral reefs) are permitted:**
yes no

**2.11. Shrimp farming and fry catching are regulated:** yes no

**2.12. The following activities are regulated by specific laws and regulations** (please, specify if at the national and/or local level)
(tick all the relevant options)

- scuba diving □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- recreational boating □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- reef walking □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- recreational fishing □ at the national □ local □ level(s)

- speed boating □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- jet skiing □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- driving on sandy beaches □ at the national □ local □ level(s)
- parking on sandy beaches □ at the national □ local □ level(s)

**2.13. Environmental Impact Assessment legislation is in force:**

yes no

2.13.1 If yes, does it include tourism related services and facilities?

yes no

**2.14. An Integrated Coastal Area Management Plan is in place:**

yes no

2.14.1 Please rate the implementation:

Poor □
Adequate □
Successful □

2.14.2. Please describe the extent of this plan and the parties involved:

| |
|---|
| |

**2.15. A Tourism Development Plan(s) has been developed:**

yes no

2.15.1. If yes, at what level?

National □
Local □

2.15.2. What are the main guidelines and recommendations highlighted?

| |
|---|
| |

**2.16. A Local Agenda 21 strategy has been developed:**

yes no

2.16.1 If yes, what are the main guidelines and recommendations highlighted?

| |
|---|
| |

**2.17. The above Plans, or other documents, include:**
(tick all the relevant options)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Zoning of the coastal areas: | yes | no |
| Set back limits: | yes | no |
| Guidelines and regulations for buildings construction and development (i.e. building height regulations etc): | yes | no |
| Regulation/standards for coastal structures (piers, groynes): | yes | no |
| Regulations for trails protection: | yes | no |
| Guidelines for development in special sensitive areas: | yes | no |

If yes, for: (tick all the relevant options)

| | |
|---|---|
| Mangroves | □ |
| Corals | □ |
| Dune systems | □ |
| Sea grass beds | □ |
| Wetlands | □ |

**2.18. Protected areas have been established:**

yes no

2.18.1 If yes, in the legislation tourism is indicated as one of the permitted uses:

yes no

2.18.2. If yes, please describe how these areas are managed and by whom:

| |
|---|
| |

**2.19. Emergency plans for natural disasters exist:**

yes no

**2.20. Oil pollution accident emergency plans exist:**

yes no

**2.21. Regulations to protect bathers exist at the national and/or local level:**

yes no

2.21.1 If yes, they address: (tick all the relevant options)

| | |
|---|---|
| Domestic animals | □ |
| Toxic, dangerous, poisonous animals | □ |
| Sea currents | □ |
| Life guards on duty | □ |
| Danger flags regulations | □ |
| Rescue equipment requirements | □ |
| Safety risk assessment | □ |

## 3. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1. Please indicate the different administrative levels in your country: (state, region, province, municipality etc).

| |
|---|
| |

### 3.2. Please map out the institutional organization of your country. For each of the following issues, please indicate the responsible Ministry and Department.

In addition:

- Specify if the implementation agency is different.
- Indicate if sub-national and local authorities detain some regulatory power as well.

| Issue | Ministry/ Department responsible at national level | Implementation agency (if different) | Sub-national and local authorities with regulatory power |
|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental protection | | | |
| Tourism | | | |
| Coastal areas' management | | | |
| Marine activities/fisheries | | | |
| Marine activities/boating | | | |
| Ports | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Off-shore drilling | | | |
| Protected areas | | | |
| Water quality: definition of guidelines | | | |
| Water quality: monitoring | | | |
| Safety: natural disasters | | | |
| Safety: protection of users of coastal areas | | | |
| Education | | | |
| Sanitary infrastructure: planning | | | |
| Local communities' consultation | | | |
| Coordination with Non Governmental Organizations' | | | |

**3.3. Please describe the coastal zone's ownership system in force in your country.**

| |
|---|
| |

**3.4. Are formal procedures for community involvement and consultation, in the decision making process, in place** (i.e. public consultation is required on project undergoing E.I.A. etc)?

**3.5. Please provide examples, if any, of community involvement:**

## 4. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

**4.1. Please list the laboratories equipped to run water quality testing.**
(Please indicate if private or public and their location. If possible, please add contact details)

**4.2. Please list universities and research institutes (or just experts) with research facilities and programmes on marine and coastal issues** (if possible, please add contact details):

**4.3. Inventory studies of natural coastal and marine resources exist:** yes no

**4.4. Inventory studies of tourist coastal and marine resources/attractions exist:** yes no

**4.5. Base line studies of the state of environment exist:** yes no

**4.6. A "State of the environment" report is produced regularly at the national and/or local level:** yes no

**4.7. Data bases on environmental related issues exist:** yes no

4.7.1. If yes, please provide details on type of data base, operating agency, and eventually contact details:

| |
|---|
| |

**4.8. Maps of the coastal areas exist:** yes no

4.8.1. Natural resources and features of the coastal areas have been mapped: yes no

4.8.2. Endangered habitats have been mapped: yes no

4.8.3 Biodiversity hotspots have been mapped: yes no

**4.9. You collect statistics on:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| International tourism arrivals: | yes | no |
| Domestic tourism arrivals: | yes | no |
| Tourists' preferences: | yes | no |
| Tourists' satisfaction levels: | yes | no |

4.9.1 If yes, please describe shortly:

| |
|---|
| |

## 5. IMPROVING IN-COUNTRY CAPACITY

### 5.1. Training programmes for public officials exist for:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Tourism management | yes | no |
| Safety | yes | no |
| Environmental management | yes | no |

5.1.1. If yes, please describe and provide, if possible, the contact details:

### 5.2. How is the promotion of tourism organized in your country?

### 5.3. Please describe, if any, special promotion campaigns focussing on tourism in coastal areas (please attach, if any, promotional material):

## 6. RAISING AWARENESS AND VOLUNTARY INITIATIVES

**6.1. Please describe, if any, information and awareness raising campaigns on tourism related issues** (at the national and local levels)**:**

**6.2. Please describe, if any, information and awareness raising campaigns for the protection of the coastal environment, at the national and local levels** (i.e. beach clean ups, "save the …" campaigns etc):

**6.3. Tourism facilities and services have voluntarily adopted Environmental Management System (based on ISO 14000 standards)**:

yes no

6.3.1. If yes, please provide examples (if possible contact details):

**6.4. Tourism facilities and services have voluntarily conducted eco-audits:**

yes no

6.4.1. If yes, please provide examples (if possible contact details):

**6.5. Other voluntary certification schemes (ecolabels and codes of conduct), targeting the tourism industry, exist:**

yes no

6.5.1. If yes, please describe and provide contact details:

## 7. THE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

**7.1. Which are the main Non Governmental Organizations working on:**
(please indicate, if possible, at which level they operate, i.e. local, national, regional)

7.1.1. environmental protection of the coastal area

7.1.2. environmental education on tourism related issues

7.1.3. recreational issues

**7.2. Other relevant stakeholders operating in the coastal areas are:**

7.2.1. Associations of tourist operators (hoteliers, tour operators and others)

7.2.2. Consumers' associations

7.2.3. Manufacturing industries associations

7.2.4. Associations of fishermen

7.2.5. Associations of local/regional authorities

7.2.6. Associations of minorities living in the coastal area

7.2.7. Associations of disabled persons

7.2.8. Boating/marina association

7.2.9. Lifesaving association

## 8. REGIONAL COOPERATION

**8.1. Your country is member of a Regional Organization(s) involved in the sustainable development of tourism:** yes no

8.1.1. If yes, please describe:

**8.2. Your country is signatory of Regional Convention(s) with relevance to sustainable tourism development** (i.e. regional water quality standards, biodiversity etc): yes no

8.2.1. If yes, please describe:

**8.3. Your country is part of a Regional Development Plan which includes guidelines/strategies for sustainable tourism development:**

yes no

8.3.1. If yes, please explain:

## 9. COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

**9.1. Do you feel that the Blue Flag programme could help improve the environmental quality of your country's coastal areas?** Please, explain:

**9.2. Do you feel that the Blue Flag programme could help increase tourists' arrival and the rate of tourists' returns?** Please, explain:

**9.3. Do you feel that the Blue Flag programme could represent an instrument to solve other critical issues?** Please, explain:

**9.4. What type of measures (standards, regulations, management practices etc) would you suggest to introduce as criteria, in relation to:**

9.4.1. water quality:

9.4.2. environmental management:

9.4.3. environmental education and information:

9.4.4. safety and services:

9.4.5. other issues of interest:

**9.5. What is the interest level in the Blue Flag programme at the national and local levels?** Please explain:

**9.6. What are the areas of expertise or support currently missing that would help make a stronger national Blue Flag programme?**

**9.7. Do you have suggestions on how to transfer effectively the Blue Flag programme in your country and how it could grow?**

**9.6. Do you have other comments?**

| |
|---|
| |

## Thank you for completing the form!

National Workshop on Blue Flag Beach Conservation Project in South Asia

24 February - 12 March 2010

Questionnaire 2

Background information for the Regional Project Development

Name :

Organization:

1. International Tourist Arrival in your country during the past five years (2005-2009

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | |

2. Name the five main coastal areas preferred by tourists and the major ecosystem types associated with them

| | Beach | Coral Reef | Mangrove | Sea Grass / sea weed | Sand dunes | Areas of rich biodiversity | Others (specify) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

3. List the most important and relevant impacts of tourism development in the coastal areas of your country ( both positive and negative).

   1
   2

3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

4. List the legal and policy framework and mechanisms or measures put in place by relevant Government institutions and the tourism industry for restricting / regulating the tourism related activities in the coastal areas, for preventing environmental degradation and for enhancing the environmental values for tourism.

5. Presently there is an increased intensity of pressure from domestic tourism in coastal areas, especially during weekends and holidays. Please spell out the activities if any, introduced to minimize these impacts locally.

6. Name the legally protected coastal and marine areas (e.g. National Parks, Biosphere reserves, Sanctuaries, etc) where tourism is presently being practiced and also give information on the differences if any, in the tourist activities practiced in these areas, as compared to those in the other areas.

7. List out the measures that are in pipeline or proposed to be introduced for regulating coastal tourism in your country in the next few years.

8. Any other information related to promoting environment friendly coastal tourism

# THE BLUE FLAG

eco-label for beaches and marinas

The Foundation for Environmental Education

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## Contact information


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## Websites

**www.blueflag.org**

**www.fee-international.org**


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# The Blue Flag Programme

The Blue Flag Programme is a voluntary eco-label for beaches and marinas. The programme is run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non profit non governmental organisation with member organisations in 49 countries as of June 2007. The Blue Flag Programme started in Europe in 1987 with the purpose of encouraging beaches to comply with the EU Bathing Water Directive. The Programme criteria have since developed to address a wide range of environmental and safety issues. The number of participating countries and of beaches and marinas receiving the award has increased yearly.

The Blue Flag is given to beaches and marinas that meet a specific set of criteria concerning environmental information and education, water quality, safety and services and environmental management. It has become a symbol of quality recognised by tourists and tour operators and can be used for the promotion of the awarded beach or marina.

The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management and staff. The programme criteria are also designed to work with the national, regional and local legislation of each country, thereby assuring that the legislation is being followed. It can also be used to set a benchmark higher than what already exists.

As of 2007 there were over 3200 sites awarded with the Blue Flag in 37 countries including countries in Europe, in the Caribbean, Morocco, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa.

Current information about participating countries and awarded sites can be found on the website **www.blueflag.org**.

## Other programmes run by FEE

- Eco-Schools
- Young Reporters for the Environment
- Learning About Forests
- Green Key

## Programme Criteria Areas

- Environmental Education and Information
- Water Quality
- Environmental Management
- Safety and Services

# Blue Flag Beach Programme

The criteria for the Blue Flag Beach Programme have developed over the years to become more holistic and to address the various issues of sustainability. The criteria are designated as either imperative or guideline, or not applicable for certain regions. The main criteria are:

**Environmental Education and Information**
- Information about coastal zone eco-systems and nearby sensitive areas must be displayed
- Information about bathing water quality must be posted
- A code of conduct for the beach area must be displayed
- A minimum of 5 environmental education activities must be offered

**Water Quality**
- Compliance with standards for excellent bathing water quality
- No industrial or sewage related discharges may affect the beach area
- Compliance of the community with requirements for sewage treatment and effluent quality

**Environmental Management**
- The beach must be clean
- Camping and driving must be regulated
- A beach management committee must be established to be in charge of the environmental management system

**Safety and Services**
- Lifeguards and/or lifesaving equipment must be available at the beach
- A map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed
- An emergency plan to cope with pollution safety risks must be in place

For more information please visit: **www.blueflag.org/Criteria/Beaches**

# Blue Flag Marina Programme

The criteria for the Blue Flag Marina Programme have also developed over time to become more demanding and to address issues within the broader context of sustainability. The criteria are either imperative or guideline. The main criteria are:

**Environmental Education and Information**
- Information about natural sensitive areas must be displayed
- A code of environmental conduct must be posted
- The marina must offer at least three environmental education activities to the users and staff of the marina
- The Individual Blue Flag for boat owners must be offered at the marina

**Environmental Management**
- An environmental policy and plan must be produced
- Adequate and well managed litterbins must be in place
- Recycling facilities must be offered
- Bilge and toilet pumping facilities must be present
- No pollution from boat washing/repair areas may enter the sewage system or natural surroundings

**Safety and Services**
- Adequate equipment for lifesaving, first-aid and fire-fighting must be in place
- An emergency plan to cope with pollution, fire or other accidents must be produced
- Safety precautions and information must be posted at the marina
- Facilities for disabled people must be in place
- Electricity and water facilities must be available at the berths
- A map indicating the location of the different facilities must be posted at the marina

**Water Quality**
- The water must be visually clean (no oil, litter, sewage or other evidence of pollution)

For more information please visit: **www.blueflag.org/Criteria/Marinas**

# Blue Flag in a New Country



**Getting Started**
To establish the Blue Flag Programme in a new country a nationally active non-profit, non-governmental organisation must first become a member of the Foundation for Environmental Education. The organisation will be the national representative and responsible body for FEE in that country. This NGO should have environmental education as one of its aims, have the necessary resources available to run the programme, and meet other criteria set by FEE.

**The Application Process**
Interested organisations should contact the FEE secretariat and apply for associate membership. In the application they must demonstrate their capabilities and how they plan to run the Blue Flag Programme. They must also present a plan for how they will, within three years of becoming members, start running a second FEE programme. The new FEE member organisation will be assigned a mentor to instruct them through the first few years.

**Developing the Blue Flag Programme**
At the start of the Blue Flag Programme, a national information workshop must be held. Also a National Blue Flag Committee must be established, consisting of representatives from the national water-, tourism-, education- and environmental authorities. Other relevant experts and interest groups such as beach/marina associations and recreational groups should also be a part of the committee.
The National Blue Flag Committee will review the international criteria and identify how they fit with their local legislation and situation. They will then choose one or more beaches or marinas to become the first Blue Flag pilot sites. These first pilot sites will serve as learning opportunities and examples for other beaches and marinas in the country. Once the pilot sites have successfully completed a season and they show to be in full compliance with the Blue Flag criteria, they can apply for the full Blue Flag status.

For more information about becoming a member of FEE (and starting any of the programmes) please visit: **www.fee-international.org**

# Application Procedure for Beaches and Marinas

**Initial Contact**
Beaches and marinas which would like to apply for the Blue Flag award should first contact their national FEE organisation's Blue Flag operator. The national operators provide interested parties with the national Blue Flag application form and procedural instructions. A pre-application review of the applicant is sometimes done to help identify problem areas that could be improved.

**The Selection Process**
The National Jury meets once a year to review the candidates from that country and to decide if they are in compliance with all of the Blue Flag criteria. Approved candidates are then forwarded to the International Jury. The International Blue Flag Jury meets twice a year to review candidates from different areas of the world. Once the candidates have been accepted by the International Jury they are awarded with the Blue Flag for one season.

**Control Visits**
Control visits are made during the Blue Flag season by both national and international controllers to assure that all criteria are met. If problems are found the flag is withdrawn until these are fixed. If the problem is very serious or if it is not fixed within a given period of time, the flag is withdrawn for the rest of the season. The public is also encouraged to report any problems about Blue Flag beaches and marinas to the national and international Blue Flag contacts.

## National Jury Composition

- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Tourism and/or National Tourism Association
- Association of Local Authorities
- National Sailing Association or other marina experts
- Association of beach/marina managers
- National lifesaving association
- Education experts
- Other NGOs
- Other experts

## International Jury Composition

- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
- International Lifesaving Federation (ILS)
- International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA)
- World Conservation Union (IUCN)
- European Union for coastal Conservation (EUCC)
- Environmental Education Expert

# Environmental Education

Each Blue Flag marina and beach are required to carry out three or five environmental education activities respectively. These activities should target different groups such as tourists, boat owners, staff, children or local populations. The activities can vary from drawing competitions to clean-up days, seminars, guided nature walks, publications etc. Here are a few examples:

### Croatia - Landscapes and Nature

The Croatian Blue Flag organisation published unique brochures for each county, highlighting the natural characteristics of each. The brochures inform the public about the geography, plant and animal life of the counties, and also highlight the special protected areas in each county. They are written in both Croatian and English. The brochures were made in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, and the Ministry of the Sea, Tourism and Development.

### Portugal – National Surveillance Programme

During the summer season, the Portuguese Blue Flag organisation involves young persons, ages 16 to 24, in controlling the Blue Flag beaches. Together they patrol the beaches, simultaneously learning about the coastal environment and assuring that the criteria are being followed. The activity is jointly coordinated by the Portuguese Blue Flag staff, the Portuguese National Youth Institute and the Scouts. Often representatives from local NGO's are also involved.

### France – Recycling Competition

Children from primary schools and holiday centres can develop their hand working skills and imaginations by transforming paper into figurines. This activity explains, in an entertaining way, the life cycle of a product such as paper to increase their understanding about waste, recycling and reusing.

# The Individual Blue Flag for Boat Owners

Individual commitment is one of the best ways to encourage good environmental practices. To stimulate this, the Individual Blue Flag was created for the use of boat owners. Boat owners can obtain the pennant at their local Blue Flag marina office or contact the National or the International Blue Flag coordinator. They can receive the Individual Blue Flag by signing a Code of Conduct.

## The Code of Conduct contains such Statements as:

- **I will not throw garbage into the sea or along the coast**
- **I will not release toilet water in the sea in coastal waters and sensitive areas**
- **I will deliver poisonous or toxic waste to the containers in the marina (e.g. oil, paint, used batteries, cleaning agents, etc.)**
- **I will promote and use recycling facilities (glass, paper, etc.)**
- **I will use the most environmentally friendly products among paints, antifouling, paint remover, detergents, etc.**
- **I will instantly report pollution or other violations of environmental regulations to the authorities**
- **I will not use forbidden fishing practices and I will respect periods when fishing is prohibited**
- **I will respect vulnerable and protected areas**
- **I will avoid damaging the sea bottom, e.g. in the way that I anchor**
- **I will not buy or use objects made form protected species of from archaeological underwater findings**
- **I will encourage other sailors also to take care of the environment**

## More information please visit:

www.blueflag.org/Criteria/BlueFlagforBoats

# National Blue Flag[110] contacts

| | |
|---|---|
| Aruba | Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association |
| Bahamas | Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation |
| Belgium Bond | Beter Leefmilieu |
| Brazil | Instituto Ambiental Ratones |
| Bulgaria | Bulgarian Blue Flag Movement |
| Canada | Environmental Defence Canada |
| Chile | Instituto de Ecología Política |
| Croatia | Pokret Prijatelja Prirode – “Lijepa Nasa” |
| Cyprus | Cyprus Marine Environment Protection Association |
| Denmark | Friluftsrådet |
| Dominican Republic | Instituto de Derecho Ambiental de la Republicia Dominicana |
| England and N. Ireland | ENCAMS |
| Estonia | Hoia Eesti Merd |
| Finland | Pidä Saaristo Siistinä ry |
| France | FEEE France |
| Germany | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Umwelterziehung |
| Greece | Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature |
| Iceland | Landvernd |
| Ireland | An Taisce |
| Italy | FEE Italia |
| Jamaica | Negril area Environmental Protection Trust |
| Latvia | FEE Latvia |
| Lithuania | Lietuvos Zaliuju Judejimas |
| Malta | Nature Trust Malta |
| Montenegro | Environmental Consultancy of Montenegro |
| Morocco | Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l’Environnement |
| Netherlands | FEE-N |
| New Zealand | FEE-NZ |
| Norway | FEE-Norway |
| Poland | Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation |
| Portugal | ABAE / FEE Portugal |
| Puerto Rico | Organizacion Pro Ambiente Sustentable |
| Romania | Central Carpato-Daunbian de Geoecologie |
| Russia | Keep Saint-Petersburg Tidy |
| Scotland | Keep Scotland Beautiful |
| Slovenia | DOVES / FEE Slovenia |
| South Africa | Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa |
| Spain | Asociación de Educación Ambiental y del Consumidor |
| Sweden | Håll Sverige Rent |
| Tunisia | Association Tunisienne pour la protection de la nature et de l’Environnement |
| Turkey | Türkiye Cevre Egitim Vakfi |
| Wales | Keep Wales Tidy |

For further information please visit: **www.blueflag.org/ContactBlueFlag**

# Blue Flag Sponsors



We would like to thank our corporate sponsors for their continued support which has made the development and expansion of the programme possible. Their support has contributed to the health of marine environments and the education and awareness of the world's people.

| | | |
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| | |
|---|---|
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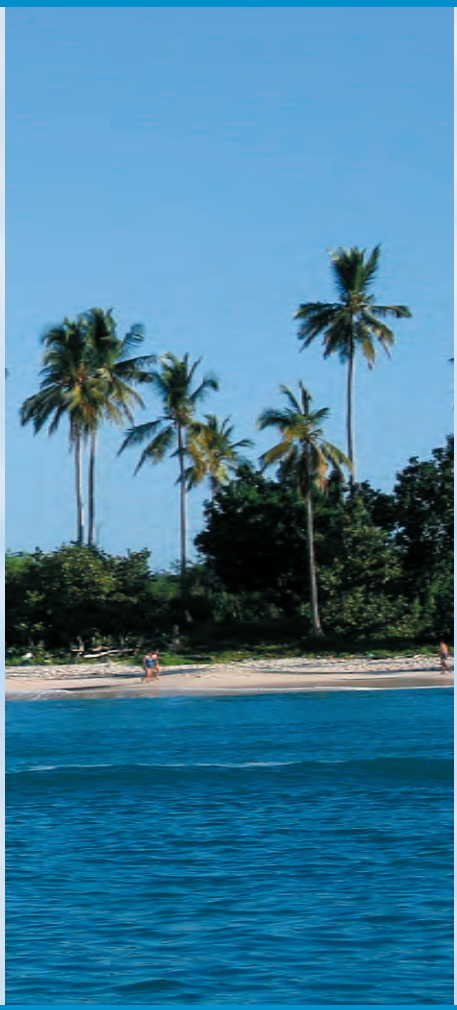
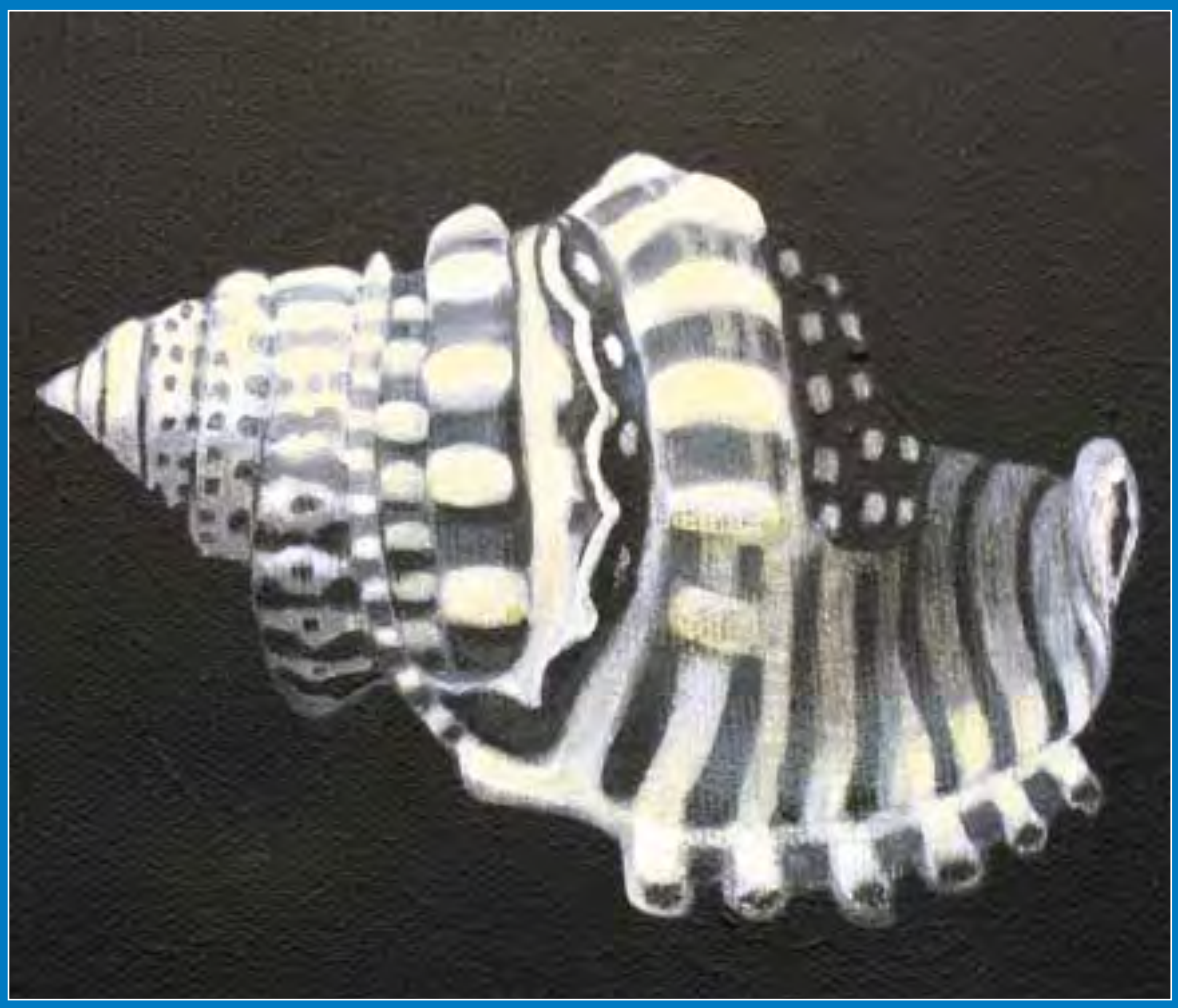
| **European Union for Coastal Conservation (EUCC)** | **www.eucc.net** |
| **International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA)** | **www.icomia.org** |
| **International Lifesaving Federation (ILS)** | **www.ilsf.org** |
| **Reef Check** | **www.reefscheck.org** |
| **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** | **www.unepie.org** |
| **The World Conservation Union (IUCN)** | **www.iucn.org** |
| **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** | **www.world-tourism.org** |



www.blueflag.org
www.fee-international.org

# Awards for Improving the Coastal Environment: The example of the Blue Flag



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# Foreword

The Foundation for Environmental Education – FEE, is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation promoting sustainable development through environmental education and the running of its five programmes, Eco-Schools, LEAF, Young Reporters for the Environment, the Green Key and Blue Flag. The Blue Flag Programme is specifically focused on promoting sustainable development in the coastal tourism sector.

The United Nations Environment Programme – UNEP, through its Tourism Programme under the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP/DTIE) has the mission of ensuring that conservation, through sustainable management and use of the natural, cultural and man-made environment, is an integral part of all tourism development.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation – UNWTO, has continued to support the dissemination of practices on the benefits of tourism and its contribution to the sustainable use of natural resources. As such, UNWTO has produced a number of technical publications with tourism development guidelines and specific policy instruments, including methodologies for setting up sustainability indicator systems at destinations.

Within this scope, the present FEE/UNEP/UNWTO publication provides an update on the status of the Blue Flag Programme and its expansion to new countries of the World.

It further outlines the path that a country may take in adopting the Blue Flag Programme to enhance the quality of their coastal environment. In this regard, the new experiences in the application of the Blue Flag in South Africa, Canada, and the Caribbean region, with diverse ecological, cultural and socio-economic realities, are highlighted as examples outside the European context.

# Acknowledgement

FEE would like to thank the Blue Flag partners, national, and regional coordinators for their insight and work with this document:

- UNEP Division of Technology Industry and Economics (Tourism Programme): Helena Rey de Assis, Giulia Carbone, former Programme Officer
- WTO: Eugenio Yunis, Head, Sustainable Development of Tourism
- The Blue Flag Caribbean Consortium: Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), and the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST)
- Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA): Alison Kelly, Blue Flag operator
- Environmental Defence, Canada: Sarah Winterton, Blue Flag operator

Initial work for this document was done by Monica Borobia (Consultant with UNEP).

Production and management of this publication was coordinated by FEE and the International Blue Flag Coordination – Finn Bolding Thomsen and Carrie A. Dean.

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# 1. Introduction

Recreation, when properly planned and managed, can minimise impacts on coastal environments and serve as a driving force in bringing sustainable tourism as a vehicle of development to local communities and destinations. Tourism and recreation associated with "sea and sun", is recognised as an essential component of domestic and international trade and a major contributor to economic growth. However, the costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism can also be felt. Losses in traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality, and the natural resource base, which ultimately supports tourism development, are some of the concerns raised.

Businesses and Governments alike are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward, in an attempt to be more responsive to current market, environmental and community requirements. Central to this process are the adoption of voluntary initiatives such as environmental guidelines, codes of conduct and certification schemes that encourage commitment to change. Numerous voluntary initiatives exist in developed and developing countries, particularly in the hospitality sector, and are moving the industry beyond compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Voluntary initiatives are also being recognized as effective tools supporting implementation of Government programmes for integrated coastal zone management.

Despite such benefits, much remains to be done in creatively fostering responsible growth while safe guarding the quality of coastal destinations. For this reason, UNEP and UNWTO aim at supporting balanced policies based on a spectrum of tools that may include voluntary initiatives, such as eco-labels, while recognising, at the same time, that they are not the only avenue that can be pursued.

It is against this background that the Foundation for Environmental Education presents this publication with the example of the Blue Flag Programme. This is the first award scheme for coastal recreation in Europe, which was designed incorporating existing relevant instruments, such as the criteria to comply with the European Union Directive on Bathing Water Quality, thus facilitating coastal zone management and integrating the implementation of legal obligations.

The Blue Flag Programme is increasingly being conducted within a wider context, improving the environmental quality of beaches and marinas and the management of coastal areas in a holistic way. It is a system that does not curtail recreation and tourism in the coastal area but rather deals with it through a wide range of subjects, activities and users that have direct and indirect interactions with the coastal environment. The Blue Flag Programme serves to encourage authorities and managers to provide beaches and marinas with a certain level of environmental quality, cleanliness, and safety standards for local populations and tourists.

South Africa was the first non-European country to start the implementation of the Blue Flag Programme in 1991. Caribbean countries and FEE, in cooperation with UNEP, the UNWTO and the Caribbean Blue Flag Consortium, have been working since 1999 on the application of the scheme in the Caribbean which has largely succeeded. As of 2006 other non-European countries involved in the Blue Flag Programme are Brazil, Canada, Chile, Morocco, and New Zealand which are at different stages of implementation.

This report is particularly directed to potential institutions interested in operating the Blue Flag Programme at a national level, i.e. becoming National Blue Flag Operators.

# 2. Coastal Tourism: Economic relevance and environmental implications

*Small Island Developing States, such as in the Caribbean and South Pacific regions, heavily rely on coastal areas and beaches to support tourism, recreational activities and mobilise economies.*

## 2.1 Tourism and Environmental Degradation

Travel and tourism is one of the World's biggest industries, accounting for nearly 200 million jobs, and over 10 per cent of world GDP, more than US$ 3,500 billion. Predictions are that by 2020, 1.5 billion international tourists will be spending US$ 2 trillion a year – or over US$ 5 billion every day, this is in addition to domestic tourists, the number of which is very large, especially those using beaches, but difficult to calculate.

Tourism is recognised as one of the most important economic activities of coastal areas. Several regions of the World, notably those comprising Small Island Developing States such as the Caribbean and South Pacific, rely heavily on coastal areas and beaches to support tourism, recreational activities and to mobilise economies.

Although medium to long-term prospects for international tourism have steadily forecasted worldwide growth, the sector has to cope with instability factors such as extreme weather events, economic slowdown, political conflicts and currency fluctuations. In the face of instability, leisure activities tend to be the first affected when household budgets are constrained.

In the above scenario, there is no doubt that the integrity and health of coastal areas are of strategic importance to the development and long term sustainability of the tourism industry.

Marine and coastal environments contain diverse habitats typically comprised of sand dunes, rocky shores, cliffs, beaches, estuaries and lagoons, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds. All such habitats are environmental assets that provide much of the basis for tourism activities that occur in coastal areas. Hence, environmental degradation and changes in coastal areas directly affect their sustainability and capacity to provide environmental services, such as acting as a buffer against erosion and storms, as well as serving as a source of marine recreation and food resources. Coastal ecosystems are interlinked, with their function and resilience depending on dynamic relationships among species and physical and chemical interactions within the marine environment.

*Coastal environments contain diverse habitats, such as mangroves, rocky shores, cliffs, beaches and others, which are environmental assets that provide much of the basis for tourism activities to occur in coastal areas.*

Coastal areas are exposed to environmental stress because of:

- Land-based sources of pollution including discharge of untreated sewage and industrial effluents
- Marine pollution including oil spills
- Sedimentation as a result of erosion
- Aquaculture activities along shorelines
- Habitat destruction
- Unplanned or ill-planned infrastructure and construction developments and non-regulated activities and
- Petroleum and gas exploitation

The activities listed above indicate that practices at sea and on land can impact the marine environment and its water quality. For example, sedimentation and contamination from untreated sewage, pesticides and other toxic substances can cause coral loss to extents that they may be unable to recuperate. Corals contribute to the formation of many of the World's beaches, through the mechanical breakdown of hard skeletons of calcium carbonate, which make up fine particles of white sand. The loss of beaches have serious consequences among which is the immediate erosion of the coastline, subsequent saline intrusion and soil alteration. In addition to the ecological role that coastal ecosystems play, significant economic, social and cultural values must also be considered.

Coastal tourism is susceptible to other factors, which include hurricanes and tsunamis, as well as man-made effects such as climate change and sea level rise.

**The value of coral reefs:**
It is estimated at between US$100,000 to US$600,000 per square kilometre a year. The estimated cost of protecting them, through the management costs of a marine protected area, is just US$775 per square kilometre per annum. The costs of installing artificial breakwaters made of concrete tetrapods around the Male, Maldives, was US$10 million per kilometre. This was done following the degradation of the natural reef. In Indonesia, a hotel in West Lombok has spent an average of US$125,000 per annum over seven years restoring its 250 metre-long beach following erosion as a result of offshore coral mining.

*Source: In the Front Line: Shoreline Protection and other Ecosystem Services from Mangroves and Coral Reefs.*

Tourism dependent-economies suffer from such environmental degradation and the resulting decline in tourism causes losses in government revenues and income to local communities and businesses, gradually worsening conditions at the destination level.

While the positive impacts of tourism can be clearly felt in economic terms such as employment and revenue generation, seasonal and spatial concentration of tourists have serious implications for resource management. Increased tourism in coastal areas impacts the physical environment and biodiversity, for example, increased rates of erosion, damage to coral reefs and destruction of mangroves for development purposes.

*Coastal areas are exposed to various environmental stresses and increased tourism may impact their physical environment and biodiversity.*

## The Effects of Water Pollution

- Poorly treated or untreated sewage released into water introduces pathogens, which are a human health hazard. Sewage in seawater is especially critical, since the salinity of the water inhibits the natural bacterial breakdown of the wastes.
- Cholera, typhoid, dysentery, hepatitis, and a variety of skin and eye diseases can be transmitted through contaminated water, fish and all other seafood.
- Solid wastes and effluents dumped in deeper water are often washed up on shore. This is not only unsightly and unhealthy: damage to aquatic life is inevitable.
- Sewage and wastes in water increases its nutrient levels, which can speed up eutrophication. Excessive plant growth affects the volume of dissolved oxygen, which in turn will reduce the growth and diversity of aquatic invertebrates and fish.
- Oil spills from pleasure boats and ships can kill birds and all forms of aquatic life.
- Heavy metals and chemical run-offs from tourist boats, marinas and other such facilities are toxic to aquatic life. Some of these chemicals are surprisingly stable in the environment; they can accumulate in the fatty tissues of aquatic animals and birds further up the food chain.
- Erosion increases silting, which reduces the dissolved oxygen supply for animals and plants, and the amount of sunlight penetrating the water.
- The removal of coral, live shells and other forms from reefs for the making of tourist souvenirs causes the reef and a large section of the coastal ecology to die.

*Source: Sowing the Seeds of Change- An Environmental Teaching pack for the Hospitality*

Infrastructure such as sewage systems, solid waste disposal, transport services and drinking water supplies are also key factors. While these may be sufficient for a community for most of the year, they may not be adequate during the peak tourist period.

Tourist influx and demographic changes in coastal areas are also presenting new environmental and social challenges, from urban expansion to erosion of traditional cultural values. Additionally, health and safety issues are equally important elements to be addressed when dealing with coastal degradation. Risks to human health imposed from sewage pollution in the water, through respiratory and intestinal diseases and infections among bathers and to marine life stimulating excessive growth of marine plant life – eutrophication – depleting oxygen levels, are also among the challenges facing recreation and tourism.

## 2.2 The role of voluntary initiatives in Coastal Zone Management

The task of managing the coastal natural environment and their changes will grow in importance as the demand for a quality environment by tourism increases. Success in protecting the marine environment while fostering recreation and tourism will depend on the active cooperation of governments, industry, conservation organisations and local communities.

The importance of coastal and marine resources in meeting current and future development needs requires a strategic approach to planning and management of coastal areas, in order to maintain their functions and the services which they provide. Integrated Coastal Zone Management is a process that seeks to balance the demands of development and conservation of natural resources, assisting coastal area stakeholders in achieving this goal.

There is no single blueprint for Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Among others, implementation depends upon applying a range of appropriate instruments and tools (policy, regulatory and economic), including the promotion of voluntary action by industry and stakeholders. The Blue Flag Programme is an example of a current tool for facilitating coastal zone management by improving not only the environmental quality of beaches and marinas but their management in a holistic way.

## Integrated Coastal Management

Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) – also encompassing associated freshwater catchments – is increasingly recognised as an effective approach to managing and protecting the marine and coastal environment. It merits wider application both in resolving existing problems and dealing effectively with new ones, through actions such as:

- promoting coordinated, cross-sectional, and holistic approaches to managing environmental resources and amenities taking full account of environmental, public health, economic, social and political considerations
- make environmental impact assessment (EIA), risk management, and cost-benefit analysis integral elements of the decision making process and incorporate the value of ecosystem services wherever possible
- seek active involvement and participation of all major stakeholders (local authorities, the private sector and particularly the interested public) in the design and implementation of ICM
- regularly review management systems and their implementation and adjust priorities, targets and methods as necessary and
- strengthen institutional capacities through training and retraining programmes

*Source: GESAMP (IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection). 2001. A Sea of Troubles. Rep. Stud. GESAMP No. 70. 35 pp.*

# 3. The Blue Flag Programme

## 3.1 History and development

The Blue Flag Programme is a voluntary certification scheme for beaches and marinas, owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation, the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) formerly known as FEEE – Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe. Since 1991 the organisation has become international, now with member organisations from around the World. As of 2006 FEE has member organisations in 44 countries.

The Blue Flag was born in France in 1985 where the first Blue Flags were awarded to coastal municipalities on the basis of criteria covering wastewater treatment and bathing water quality. In 1987, with support from the European Commission, the Blue Flag was brought to a European level, functioning as an instrument for application of the EU Bathing Water Directive, including other areas of environmental management, such as waste management, coastal planning and protection, as well as the inclusion of marinas.

More strict and holistic criteria have been adopted over the years. As the programme spread to regions outside Europe different sets of regional criteria were developed for beaches. In 2006 these criteria were combined into one international document which is now followed in all participating countries.

Today, the Blue Flag is a widely recognised eco-label for the public, decision-makers and tour operators. In 2006, more than 3100 beaches and marinas in 36 countries were awarded with the Blue Flag.

Implementation of the programme outside Europe began in South Africa in 1998 with the first Blue Flags awarded in 2001. Other non-European countries running the programme now include the Bahamas, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Morocco, New Zealand and Puerto Rico. Other countries such as Barbados, Brazil, Chile and Turks and Caicos are currently in the beginning phases of implementation.

*Today, the Blue Flag is a widely recognised eco-label for the public, decision-makers and tour operators, awarded in 2006 to more than 3100 beaches and marinas in 36 countries.*

## Number of Blue Flag beaches and marinas per country awarded in 2006

| Country | Beaches | Marinas |
|---|---|---|
| Belgium | 6 | 6 |
| Bulgaria | 11 | 0 |
| Canada | 5 | 0 |
| Caribbean | 9 | 2 |
| Croatia | 103 | 19 |
| Cyprus | 49 | 0 |
| Denmark | 211 | 77 |
| England and N. Ireland | 85 | 6 |
| Estonia | 2 | 4 |
| Finland | 6 | 30 |
| France | 269 | 84 |
| Germany | 39 | 123 |
| Greece | 411 | 5 |
| Iceland | 2 | 3 |
| Ireland | 81 | 3 |
| Italy | 216 | 52 |
| Latvia | 6 | 1 |
| Lithuania | 6 | 0 |
| Montenegro | 15 | 0 |
| Morocco | 4 | 0 |
| Netherlands | 40 | 45 |
| New Zealand | 0 | 1 |
| Norway | 0 | 4 |
| Poland | 2 | 3 |
| Portugal | 207 | 11 |
| Romania | 8 | 1 |
| Scotland | 8 | 1 |
| Slovenia | 8 | 2 |
| South Africa | 20 | 0 |
| Spain | 480 | 82 |
| Sweden | 45 | 58 |
| Turkey | 192 | 14 |
| Wales | 43 | 4 |

*Source: Blue Flag Programme*

## 3.2 Aims and strengths

The Blue Flag Programme works towards sustainable development at beaches and marinas through rigorous criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, safety and other services.

The main objectives of the Blue Flag Programme are to improve understanding of the coastal environment and to promote the incorporation of environmental issues in the decision-making processes of local authorities and their partners. Environmental education has been and will continue to be a core value and characteristic of the programme. Education is targeted toward decision makers, tourists, managers, employees and local communities, and can cover topics such as environmental practices, management systems, safety and nature interpretation.

The Blue Flag Programme unites stakeholders in the sustainable management and development of marinas and beaches, particularly from the tourism and environmental sectors, and at local and national levels. This is done through:

- The promotion of criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education, environmental management, safety and services
- Education of beach and marina visitors about good practices in the coastal environments
- Education of those working directly with the management of beaches and marinas
- Education of the whole community in protecting the coastal environment, and
- Encouragement of voluntary involvement in environmental action

Since it began, the Blue Flag has grown in size, in coverage, in scope and in influence. The Programme has gradually broadened its objectives to improve the environmental management of coastal regions rather than just individual beaches and marinas.

The strengths of the Blue Flag Programme are due mainly to the principles and characteristics on which the programme operates. These are:

- **Positive reinforcement**, which highlights the achievements of the award-winning beaches and marinas
- **Broad participation**, involving numerous local and national stakeholders on which all action depends
- **Voluntary action**, implying that those who volunteer to join accept the responsibility for complying with Blue Flag criteria
- **Independent operation**, so that the award system cannot be influenced by local or financial interests
- **Adaptability of criteria**, which are adopted internationally but which allow for expansion of the scheme to different regions reflecting specific environmental conditions

# 4. The Blue Flag Criteria

Two main elements related to the Blue Flag Programme are Criteria and Control & Monitoring. The criteria will be outlined in this section. Control and monitoring are a key part of the programme and will be outlined under the Actors and Procedures section.

Length of season is another element that needs to be taken into account as compliance with criteria is required during the designated Blue Flag season. The official bathing seasons and marina seasons vary among countries, from year-round to lasting several months or only a few months. The Blue Flag season should be set when visitors are present on the beaches and marinas, and for the times of year that the criteria can be met. The season might be limited, for example, due to cold weather or due to the hurricane season.

**Criteria**

The award, the Blue Flag itself, is given annually to beaches and marinas that satisfy a number of essential criteria covering aspects of:

- *Water Quality*
- *Environmental Education and Information*
- *Environmental Management*
- *Safety and Services*

The Blue Flag criteria are revised and updated every 5 years.
The beach criteria were last revised in 2006 and the marina criteria were last revised in 2004.

## 4.1 Beaches

The award of a Blue Flag beach is based on compliance with 29 criteria. Most criteria are imperative whereas others are guideline or not applicable. All imperative requirements have to be fulfilled, and compliance with a maximum number of guideline criteria is encouraged.

The international criteria are designed to allow for small variations from region to region. The full set of Blue Flag Beach Explanatory Notes outlines what these differences are.

If some of the imperative criteria are not fulfilled during the season or the conditions change, the Blue Flag will be withdrawn. The International Blue Flag beach criteria must be understood as minimum criteria: the National Programmes can choose to have stricter demands.

## International Blue Flag beach criteria for 2006

Some criteria are designated as imperative, some as guideline and some as non applicable – *Detailed current beach criteria and explanatory notes are available through the Blue Flag Programme site at: www.blueflag.org*

### WATER QUALITY

1. Compliance with the requirements and standards for excellent bathing water quality
2. No industrial or sewage related discharges may affect the beach area
3. Monitoring the health of coral reefs located in the vicinity of the beach
4. Compliance of the community with requirements for sewage treatment and effluent quality
5. Algae or other vegetation should be left to decay on the beach unless it constitutes a nuisance

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

6. Information relating to coastal zone ecosystems and natural, sensitive areas in the coastal zone must be displayed
7. Information about bathing water quality must be displayed
8. Information about the Blue Flag Campaign must be displayed
9. Code of conduct for the beach area must be displayed and the laws governing beach use must be easily available to the public upon request
10. A minimum of 5 environmental education activities must be offered

### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

11. A beach management committee must be established to be in charge of instituting environmental management systems and to conduct regular environmental audits of the beach facility
12. The beach must comply with all regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach (coastal zone planning and environmental legislation)
13. The beach must be clean
14. Waste disposal bins/receptacles must be available on/by the beach in adequate numbers, regularly maintained and emptied
15. Facilities for receiving recyclable waste materials must be available on/by the beach
16. Adequate and clean sanitary facilities with controlled sewage disposal
17. On the beach there will be no unauthorised camping or driving and no dumping
18. Regulations concerning dogs and other domestic animals on the beach must be strictly enforced
19. All buildings and equipment of the beach must be properly maintained
20. Sustainable means of transportation must be promoted in the beach area

### SAFETY AND SERVICES

21. An adequate number of lifeguards and/or lifesaving equipment must be available at the beach
22. First aid equipment must be available on the beach
23. There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents
24. An emergency plans to cope with pollution safety risks must be in place
25. There must be safe access to the beach
26. The beach area must be patrolled
27. A supply of potable drinking water must be available on the beach
28. A minimum of one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and toilet facilities provided for disabled persons
29. Map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed

## 4.2 Marinas

The growth of recreational boating and marinas has prompted a growing awareness of the need to protect the environmental quality of waterways as an integral part of the management of coastal areas.

The award of a Blue Flag marina is based on compliance with 22 criteria. As in the case of criteria for beaches, most are imperative (i) whereas others are guideline (g). All imperative requirements have to be fulfilled, and in addition a maximum number of guideline criteria. If some of the imperative criteria are not fulfilled during the season or the conditions change, the Blue Flag will be withdrawn.

### International Blue Flag marina criteria for 2006

*Detailed marina criteria and explanatory notes are available through the Blue Flag Programme site at: www.blueflag.org*

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION**

1. Environmental information about natural sensitive nearby land and marine areas is supplied to marina users (i)
2. Code of environmental conduct is posted at the marina (i)
3. Information about the Blue Flag Marina Campaign and/or the Blue Flag Marina criteria are posted in the marina (i)
4. The marina should be able to demonstrate that at least three environmental education activities are offered to the users and staff of the marina (i)
5. The individual Blue Flag for boat owners is offered through the marina (i)

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

6. Production of an environmental policy and plan at the marina referring to water, waste and energy consumption, health and safety issues, and the use of environmentally sound products when available (i)
7. Adequate and properly identified and segregated containers for the storage of hazardous wastes (paints, solvents, boat scrapings, antifouling agents, batteries, waste oil, flares). The wastes should be handled by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility for hazardous wastes (i)
8. Adequate and well managed litterbins and/or garbage containers. The wastes should be handled by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility (i)
9. The marina has facilities for receiving recyclable waste materials, such as bottles, cans, paper, plastic, organic material, etc. (i)
10. Bilge water pumping facilities are present in the marina (g)
11. Toilet pumping facilities are present in the marina (g)
12. All buildings and equipment must be properly maintained and in compliance with national legislation. The marina must be well integrated with the surrounding natural and built environment (i)
13. Adequate, clean and well sign-posted sanitary facilities, including washing facilities and drinking water. Controlled sewage disposal to a licensed sewage treatment plant (i)
14. If the marina has boat repairing and washing areas, no pollution must enter the sewage system, marina land and water or the natural surroundings (i)
15. Promotion of sustainable transportation (g)
16. No parking/driving in the marina, unless in specific designated areas (i)

**SAFETY AND SERVICES**

17. Adequate and well signposted lifesaving, first-aid equipment and fire-fighting equipment. Equipment must be approved by national authorities (i)
18. Emergency plan in case of pollution, fire or other accidents must be produced for the marina, and safety precautions must be posted at the marina (i)
19. Electricity and water is available at the berths, installations must be approved according to national legislation (i)
20. Facilities for disabled people (g)
21. Map indicating the location of the different facilities is posted at the marina (i)

**WATER QUALITY**

22. Visually clean water and marina (no oil, litter, sewage or other evidence of pollution) (i)

## 4.3 Boats

The Individual Blue Flag programme is a personal commitment scheme aimed at encouraging boaters to adopt good environmental practices in the marine environment. Individual boat owners receive a small Blue Flag pennent if they commit to following the Blue Flag Environmental Code of Conduct for boat owners. These boat owners contribute to the objectives of the Blue Flag Programme by minimizing their impact on coastal waters and marine resources. The boat owner signs the Environmental Code of Conduct declaring that he/she will act according to the directives outlined in the Code of Conduct. The content varies from country to country and can be obtained in the national language from National Blue Flag Operators.

The following issues are generally included in the Environmental Code of Conduct:

- I will not throw garbage into the sea or along the coast
- I will not release toilet water in the sea in coastal waters and sensitive areas
- I will not release poisonous or toxic waste (oil, paint, used batteries, cleaning agents, etc.) in the sea. I will deliver these types of waste to the containers in the marina
- I will promote and use recycling facilities (glass, paper, etc.)
- I will use the most environmentally friendly products among paints, anti-fouling agents, paint remover, detergents, etc, that are available and work efficiently
- I will instantly report pollution or other violations of environmental regulations to the authorities
- I will not use forbidden fishing practices and I will respect periods when fishing is prohibited
- I will protect animals and plants in the sea, including not disturbing breeding bird grounds, seals or other marine mammals
- I will respect vulnerable and protected areas
- I will avoid damage of the sea bottom, e.g. in the way that I anchor
- I will avoid disturbing fishery or fishing gear
- I will not buy or use objects made from protected species or from archaeological underwater findings
- I will encourage other sailors to also take care of the environment

# 5. Actors and Procedures

## 5.1 The Basic Procedure

The Blue Flag award is given for only one season at a time. To be eligible for the Blue Flag a beach or marina has to fulfil all imperative criteria, and is also encouraged to fulfil a maximum amount of guideline criteria.

Application procedures for beaches involve a process in which the responsible local authority (municipality) files the application form with the National Blue Flag Operator with enclosed documentation, usually following consultations with local stakeholders. In the case of marinas, the marina operator/management applies for the Blue Flag.

The applications are reviewed first by a National Jury and then by an International Jury. If the candidate is approved then the award is given for the coming season. During the season the site is monitored to assure it is in compliance with the Blue Flag criteria.

## 5.2 Actors and Responsibilities

The Blue Flag Programme is coordinated locally, nationally and internationally. The quality of the programme is heavily dependent on the strength, competence and dedication of the involved actors.

*International Blue Flag Coordination*
The international coordination is carried out by FEE through the International Coordination located in Copenhagen, Denmark, working closely with international partner organisations. It is the administrative body that deals with the daily issues of the programme at the international level. It acts as a support and resource for the National Operators, deals with future developments, questions, problems and complaints, the exchange of information among countries, and the arrangement of the International Jury evaluations.

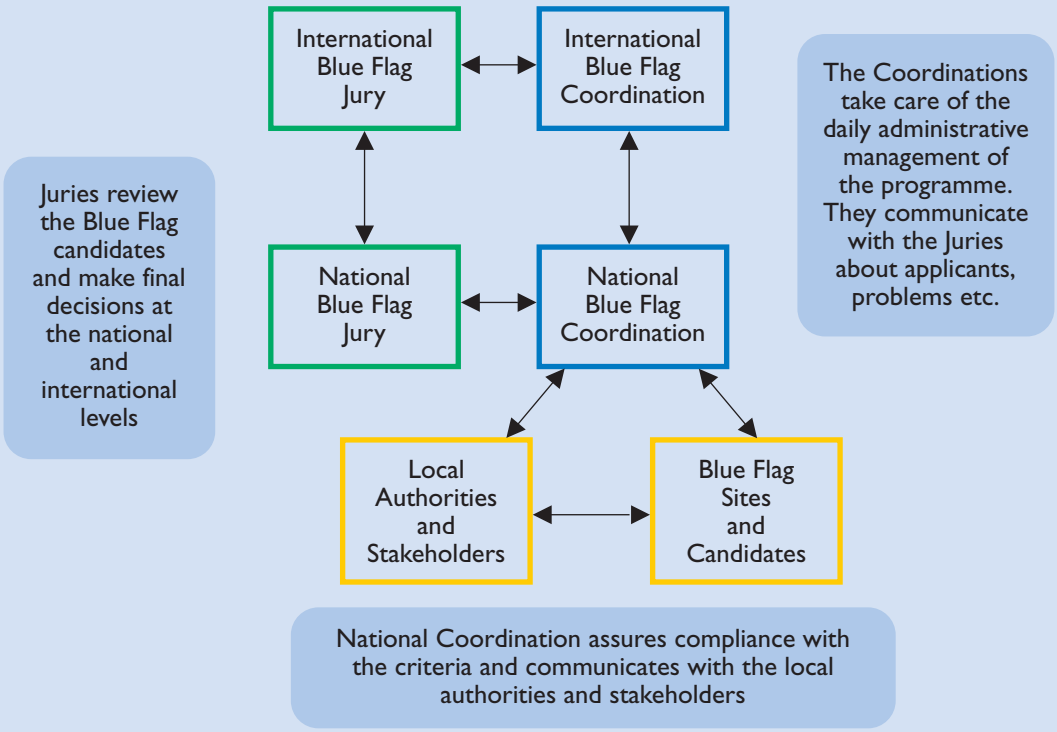
*National Blue Flag Coordination*
The running of the programme at the national levels is done through the FEE member organisation in that country who acts as the National Coordination. The National Coordination should designate one person to be the official National Operator. They deal with the daily management of the programme at the national level and manage contact with the International Coordination.

The National Blue Flag organisation is expected to fulfil a number of functions as the National Blue Flag Operator. These include:

- Providing potential participants with guidance on how to meet the Blue Flag criteria and explaining the conditions for participation
- Initial evaluation of the applications and recommendations to the National Jury
- Arrangement of the National Jury evaluation
- Carrying out consultative visits to participants and controlling compliance with the criteria during the season
- Providing the participants with information material to be distributed to visitors and users
- Publicly promoting the programme at the local and national levels
- Being a continuous source of inspiration and encouragement to the participants

- Being an active participant and contributor to the international elements of the Programme
- Fund raise for the implementation of the Blue Flag Programme at the national level
- Be active in encouraging voluntary improvements
- Be active in encouraging official and political developments on issues related to the national coastal zone and other aspects of the programme

## The Blue Flag bodies and responsibilities




*National Blue Flag Jury*

The National Blue Flag Jury is the "politically" responsible body for the national campaign. The Jury reviews Blue Flag candidate applications before they are sent to the International Jury to assure that all criteria are being met, and to discuss and take decisions regarding problems or potential problems. The composition of the Jury should assure a wide range of expertise to cover all aspects of the programme.

## Standard composition of the National Blue Flag Jury

- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Tourism and/or National Tourism Association
- Association of Local Authorities
- National Sailing Association or other marina experts
- Association of beach managers / Association of marina managers
- National lifesaving association
- Education experts
- The FEE organisation
- Other NGOs
- Other experts (e.g. Association of Consumers, Association of Boatowners, etc.)

*The International Jury*

An International Jury meets twice a year to review the applications approved by the National Juries and make decisions about dispensation cases. The International Jury is composed of major relevant stakeholders from the international level and FEE representatives. The International Jury takes the final decision regarding Blue Flag candidates.

## Composition of the International Blue Flag Jury

- FEE Executive Board
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- World Tourism Organization (WTO)
- International Lifesaving Federation (ILS)
- International Council of Marine Industry Association (ICOMIA)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Environmental education expert
- Health expert
- European Union for Coastal Conservation (EUCC) (only for European countries)
- European Union (only for European countries)

*Local Governments and Stakeholders*

Local governments and stakeholder groups play critical roles in the Blue Flag Programme. These include:

- Coordinating applications for Blue Flag awards for beaches
- Monitoring that the bathing water quality sample results for beaches are in compliance with the Blue Flag criteria and take action if problems arise
- Organizing litter collection and adequate forms of litter disposal
- Organizing the collection of waste for recycling
- Organizing the collection of hazardous wastes for appropriate disposal
- Ensuring that criteria concerning safety provisions are met
- Managing beaches/marinas to avoid environmental deterioration
- Maintaining beaches/marinas in an aesthetically-pleasing form
- Informing visitors about the need to protect the environment, safety precautions and available services
- Incorporating environmental considerations into local planning
- Improving environmental education and information activities
- Surveying awarded sites and reporting on conditions to the National Blue Flag Operator
- Flying the Blue Flag on awarded beaches/marinas and displaying the relevant criteria and information
- Publicizing the awarded sites and results of the Blue Flag Programme locally
- Taking down the flag in cases of non-compliance

## 5.3 Control and Monitoring

Consultation, assessment and monitoring are essential components to ensure compliance with the adopted criteria, a successful programme, and the credibility of the award system. Different actors control and monitor the programme in their various capacities throughout various stages of the programme year.

### Control Points

- Pre-season
- Application submittal
- National Jury
- International Jury
- Control Visits

*Pre-Season*

The National Operators should be in contact with participating sites from the previous season and with potential new sites. The potential beach and marina candidates (municipalities and marina managers) should receive information about the coming programme year, application deadlines and changes and developments in the programme.

During this time the potential candidates should also receive consultation from the National Operators about how the beach/marina could be improved. This might be in the form of workshops, seminars, meetings or personal conversations with information exchange. Other relevant stakeholders could also be involved.

This is also a good time to address any problems from the previous year and assure that they are fixed for the coming season.

*Application Submittal*

Applications are made by the municipalities and marina managers. Help and consultation is provided by the National Operator in the process. The application is submitted with supporting documents. The National Operator reviews the applications and supporting

documents, asking for more information if necessary. For beach applicants, all bathing water quality results from the past season are reviewed and checked for compliance. The applications are prepared for review by the National Jury.

*Jury meetings*

The National Jury in each country meets to review and make decisions about the beach and marina applications for that year. The Jury should be very well informed about the Blue Flag Programme, the criteria, the spirit of the programme and any new developments. The National Jury members are also the political face of the national programme. Their decisions will ultimately steer the direction and quality of the national programme.

> *The Jury members should ideally also be involved in the programme beyond the meetings, giving their support for the programme through their political and professional connections, and by helping to solve problems if they arise. For example, the representative from the Ministry of Health or Environment can address bathing water quality issues at a higher level, or the Education representative can encourage cooperation on environmental education activities with other educational institutions.*

The National Jury ultimately decides which beach and marina candidates are forwarded to the International Jury. Candidates should be rejected if they are not in full compliance with the Blue Flag criteria, or if they have not submitted all of the required documentation. In unclear situations candidates may be forwarded as dispensation cases for special consideration.

The International Jury meets twice a year, once in April to consider applicants primarily from Europe, North America and Northern Africa, and once in September to consider applicants from Southern Africa, South America, the Caribbean and Oceania. Besides reviewing beach and marina candidates, the International Jury also performs in-depth spot-check evaluations and evaluations about organisational activities at the national level such as national control visits, progress with new developments etc. The International Blue Flag Coordination receives the forwarded applications and requested information and prepares this for consideration by the International Jury.

As with the National Juries, it is the responsibility of the International Jury to review and make final decisions about the beach and marina candidates. They have the final word in the awarding of Blue Flags. The decisions of the International Jury are communicated to the National Juries who then inform the candidates of the results. FEE reserves the right to refuse or withdraw the Blue Flag if the imperative criteria are not being complied with or where the beach/marina operator or local authorities are responsible for current violations of national environmental regulations or otherwise act in discord with the objectives and spirit of the Blue Flag Programme.

*The International Jury members should also participate and support the programme outside of the meetings through their network and expertise at the international level.*

*Blue Flag Season*

During the Blue Flag season the awarded sites must be in full compliance with the Blue Flag criteria. It is the responsibility of the local authorities/ marina managers to assure that their sites are in full compliance at all times. If compliance is not met for reasons beyond their control or otherwise, the flag is to be withdrawn and the National Operator notified of the situation. The reason the flag has been withdrawn is also posted for the public on the Blue Flag Information Board at the site.

For beaches, the water quality is to be monitored by an accredited laboratory before and throughout the Blue Flag season, as according to the criteria. The updated bathing water quality results should be posted at the beach and sent to the National Operator. The National Operator should review the results for potential problems in quality or sampling frequency. If problems occur then the National Operator should actively pursue it. For example, if there is a water quality problem they should contact the authorities to locate and fix/remove the source of pollution.

It is the political responsibility of the National Jury to assure that all awarded sites are visited and controlled at least once during the season. In many countries the sites are visited by national controllers multiple times during the season. Normally it is the National Operator who controls the sites but control visits may also be done by other trained staff and volunteers. It is imperative that the people doing the controls are well educated about the programme. They must be knowledgeable about the criteria and trained to a calibrated level of stringency. Strict control of awarded sites is essential to the quality, reputation, effectiveness and future existence of the programme.

National controllers can also, at the same time, play the role of consultants for the beaches and marinas, giving them good advice about common problems, disseminating best practice information and ideas.

The International Coordination also performs control visits to a percentage of the awarded sites each year. Countries with a large number of sites are visited each year while countries with a lower amount of sites are visited every few years, or as needed if issues arise. International control visits can be announced or unannounced and they might be done together with a national controller or alone. It is valuable for the International Controller to visit some sites together with national controllers, to better calibrate the level of stringency in the interpretation of the criteria. Problems found are reported to the National Operator. Feedback about how the problems have been fixed must be given to the International Coordination within a certain time frame.

National and International Blue Flag controllers cannot observe the beaches and marinas at all times. Therefore, it is foremost the responsibility of the local authority/marina manager to assure compliance with the criteria. Their commitment to this is given when signing the Blue Flag application "contract".

Beach and marina visitors are also encouraged to be observant and give feedback to the National and International Coordination about any problems they have seen. Contact information is given on the Blue Flag information boards at each site. Complaints are immediately handled and can affect the status of the awarded site in the present season or even during the next application period.

*After the season*

Once the flags have been taken down it is a good time for the National Operator to start collecting information for the next year, reviewing problem areas, deciding how best to progress with the campaign and start arranging seminars and meetings for the municipalities, managers and other stakeholder groups.

## 5.4 Financial Resources and Support Tools

### *Financing a National Blue Flag Programme*

Various sources and modalities of financing a national Blue Flag Programme can be explored and have been used nationally. National Blue Flag operations do not have to be necessarily expensive but they all require funds. The costs might be the following:

- Costs for starting up; time and expertise needed for the feasibility study
- Annual FEE membership dues
- Operation costs for the organisation; salaries for personnel, overhead etc.
- Organisation of meetings
- Purchasing of flags
- Production and purchasing of signage
- The annual Blue Flag levy per beach/marina (30-36 € in 2006 depending on the number of sites involved in the country)
- Bathing water quality testing (if not paid for by the authorities/municipalities)
- Promotion and awareness-raising for the programme

Fund to cover these costs can normally be obtained, through:

**Government grants** – from government agencies and ministries (such as Environment, Transport, Tourism, Health) given that the objectives of the Blue Flag respond to or are complimentary to many government policies and programmes (including at the local level)

**Sponsorships** – from the private sector (such as business, travel and leisure or commercial associations, individual companies, financing institutions and banks) which may provide incentive programmes, operate in areas and with products compatible with the issues addressed by the Programme, for example recycling or coastal activity related equipment

**Fees** – fees charged by National Operators for applications are used as financial contributions to the Programme in most countries

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### *Other Resources*

The Programme can also benefit from the involvement of different partners:
**Volunteers** – can substantively reduce costs and bring new dimensions and varied expertise directly from local communities or partner institutions
**Technical partners** – individual companies, non-governmental organisations, universities, technical centres and social programmes, which can assist through jury participation, site evaluation/control visits as well as criteria development and assessment
**Communication partners** – publications can increase awareness of the programme, major events in coastal areas such as cultural fairs, shows or sport competitions can support awareness raising and education of users for effective management of the marine environment
**Official partners** – recognised official bodies that may help promote the programme through their network and name

### *Support Tools*

A number of tools are available to support the implementation of the Blue Flag Programme which are produced or organised by the International Coordination of the Programme as well as at the National level:
**Publications** – National Operator Handbook, Guide to Conducting Control Visits to Blue Flag Beaches/Marinas, Manuals and Training materials, Bi-monthly Blue Flag Newsletter, Beach and Marina Operator Handbooks
**Public Relations Materials** – leaflets, press releases, videos, reports and others
**Meetings and Workshops** – annual National Operator meetings, national seminars and training workshops, consultation visits and control visits
**Events** – Blue Flag raising ceremonies, designation of Blue Flag Day, other related environmental and educational activities (e.g. exhibitions, competitions, guided tours)

## The European Blue Flag Experience

The Blue Flag programme has been running in Europe for almost twenty years. There is a large wealth of knowledge from their experiences. The following are some lessons that have been learned in various countries.

**Greece – Towards Sustainable Coastal Tourism:**

- Prior to the Programme, beach organisation was poor; facilities and regard for the environment were inadequate. The dominating interest was economic: how to attract tourists without much in-depth consideration for the future.
- Securing private sponsorship as a strategic response to the lack of state funding as of 2000 granted greater independence from the political setting, which in turn allowed the Blue Flag Operator to implement a definite policy for improving beach quality, with award criteria interpreted more strictly each year.
- Acquired credibility and on-site results mobilised other sectors, such as hotel operators, that use the Blue Flag application procedures to prepare their environmental reports by which they are judged by foreign tour operators.
- In many beach communities, there is now considerable pride in the possession of a Blue Flag, which is manifested through celebrations when the flag is raised. Economic benefits generated include increased tourism of a higher quality. Thus, economic development produced by tourism is progressing hand in hand with nature conservation, boosting the pace towards sustainability, rather than relying on legislative measures alone.

**France – Advantages and Economic Benefits:**

- As the country which launched the Programme, the Blue Flag distinguishes and raises the profile of French coastal communities which have used the Programme as a tool to enhance coastal management and support compliance with national coastal legislation (Loi Littoral, 1986).
- The French Programme has been instrumental in ensuring that environmental and safety aspects meet the increasing expectations of tourists, particularly northern Europeans, thus strengthening competitiveness as a tourism destination.
- The economic repercussions of the Programme are many. Significant growth in visitor numbers are often reported in Blue Flag sites and in associated activities, for instance camping, particularly after the first year of receiving the award.

**Spain – Progress through Education and Partnerships:**

- As a major world tourism destination, Spain was the number one country with Blue Flags in 2005. Its Programme has been based on information and education of users, authorities and local populations. Blue Flag Manuals have been published for beaches and marinas, as a result of a Cooperation Agreement between the National Blue Flag Operator and the National Government (Secretaría de Estado, de Comercio, Turismo y Pyme), along with a variety of information materials, which include a synthesis of 60 types of environmental education activities.
- Opening up the Programme to partnerships with the private sector has enabled significant expansion of information and education activities. The relations between private sector sponsors and the National Blue Flag Operator are governed by a strict Code of Professional Ethics. It contributes to the implementation of a Programme which is independent, participatory and multi-disciplinary.

*Through the links of the Blue Flag Programme site further information can be found on National Programmes and individual beaches and marinas awarded the Blue Flag: www.blueflag.org*

# 6. Adapting the Blue Flag to a New Country

Based on the experiences accumulated to date, the process of developing and adapting the Blue Flag Programme to a new country context involves the phases outlined below. The first key is finding a suitable group/representative to take contact with FEE and drive the process.

### *Who drives the process?*

In the beginning stages a coordinator should be designated to drive the implementation of the Blue Flag programme in the new country. This is normally a representative from a non-governmental organisation (FEE member organisation). In cases where the FEE member organisation has not yet been identified a governmental representative or a private sector representative (e.g. Hotel Association) may assume this responsibility for the start-up phase of the programme.

A national NGO must be identified to run the programme beyond the start-up phase. This organisation must become a member of FEE. In order to be suitable, the organisation must be a non-profit, non-governmental, independent organisation and it must have environmental education and protection as important objectives. It must:

- Become a member of FEE
- Be in accordance with the FEE statutes
- Be able to raise the necessary funds to pay its subscription to FEE
- Be able to run the Blue Flag Programme and
- Be ready and willing to participate in the other activities of FEE, including having the capacity to run at least one of the other five FEE programmes

Within the organisation, one person will be designated as the National Blue Flag Operator. This person will be the official Blue Flag representative in that country and will be the contact person to the International Coordination.

**1. Conduct a national Blue Flag workshop**: which will introduce the Blue Flag Programme to a wide and representative range of national and regional stakeholders, presenting to them the process, discussing with them the procedures for adhesion and the feasibility study.

**2. Establish a National Blue Flag Committee**: which together with the national co-ordinating body will oversee the establishment of the Programme, from its onset to implementation, and define a strategy or plan for implementing the Blue Flag Programme, including the production of the feasibility study, training, investment programs, information exchange and monitoring progress.

A National Blue Flag Committee should be comprised of multiple stakeholders representing different interests and expertise. The composition of the Blue Flag National Committee might include the following stakeholders, among others:

- National water quality authorities
- National environmental authorities in charge of national policies on coastal zones and nature protection
- National tourism authorities
- National safety boards
- National associations of local authorities and interests

- Non-governmental organisations representing environmental interests, cultural interests, and environmental education
- National representative of the tourism trade
- National consumers' association

**3. Initiate a Blue Flag feasibility study**: which addresses the readiness of a new country to establish the programme (see Box 11). The evaluation of the Feasibility Study is carried out by the person responsible for the start-up phase of the programme with the assistance of FEE. A country visit is conducted by FEE to fill the information gaps of the study and to meet with relevant stakeholders. The feasibility study highlights which capacity gaps need to be filled in order to be able to launch the Programme.

## The Blue Flag Feasibility Study

A feasibility questionnaire was developed to assist countries in the collection of information to determine whether the necessary elements to support the establishment of a Blue Flag Programme are in place. The basic question to consider is:

- *Is there enough human, technological and institutional capacity for the Programme to exist?*

The feasibility questionnaire also helps compile information on the institutional and legal framework, on the human and technological capacity and other issues from the point of view of: threats to the environment, water quality, environmental management, human health and safety, environmental education and social, cultural and economic issues.

FEE can provide assistance in the completion of the Feasibility Study which is later given to the International Jury for approval.

*The Feasibility Study is available through the Blue Flag Programme site at: www.blueflag.org*

**4. Review the criteria**: based on the evaluation of the Feasibility Study the national committee and FEE investigate how the international criteria can be applied to reflect the countries' environmental, social and economic conditions; human and technical capacities; and institutional framework. Any additions/adaptations to the international criteria should be attainable, capable of being monitored and controlled, viable of being implemented and represent an improvement with respect to the status quo. FEE is in charge of approving regional adaptations to the criteria.

**5. Carry out a Blue Flag pilot phase**: this will serve as the platform for testing the programme and the basis for filling gaps as needed. It is also a platform for upgrading the new beaches/marinas to Blue Flag standards. The pilot beaches and marinas should serve as learning sites and later, as models for new Blue Flag beach and marina candidates. Beach and marina criteria and guidance notes are approved by the FEE Executive Board.

## What happens to the National Committee?

After the final launch of the Blue Flag Programme in a country, the National Committee, or part of it, becomes the National Jury that each year evaluates and selects the candidates for the Blue Flag to be forwarded to the International Jury.

# 7. Experiences from New Non-European Countries

### *South Africa: Advantages for Local Communities*

While the Blue Flag in South Africa has been operating only a short time, it is rapidly growing and gaining the support of government authorities as it directly contributes to the implementation of national coastal policies and legislation, as well as being seen as a timely tool for the sound development of tourism in South Africa. Its promising beginning is leading to the potential expansion of the Blue Flag Programme to other countries in the South & East African region.

KwaZulu-Natal: Some 68% of all foreigners and 71% of all domestic visitors experience the beaches of KwaZulu-Natal, equivalent to approximately 680,000 foreign visitors and almost 6 million South Africans. It is estimated that a foreign visitor to KwaZulu-Natal spends around R1600 per day whereas a domestic visitor around R800. Adhering to an internationally recognised eco-label is expected to raise benefits to municipalities participating in the Blue Flag Programme.

Local authorities participating in Blue Flag report a number of advantages from their Blue Flag beaches which include:

- job creation for unemployed segments of the population (under the Coastcare project)
- an increase in visitors to their beaches
- improved behaviour on the part of beach-goers (vandalism and damage to property drops significantly)
- beach visitors positive feedback from visiting a well cared-for and managed beach
- local businesses are using their local Blue Flag for promotional and dissemination purposes and
- property prices have risen for homes adjacent to Blue Flag beaches.

## *Caribbean: Regional Development to National Administration*

The Blue Flag Programme in the Caribbean has catalysed important changes in the way beaches are managed in the area. Five countries have been able to organize National Committees to co-ordinate individual agency programmes towards a common goal and they are now fully running the programme.

The Blue Flag programme in the Caribbean started with a regional Coordination and focus. After some time and build up of experience, the programme administration was taken over by national organisations who have direct contact with the International Coordination.

In recent years, the Caribbean tourism industry has been involved in several initiatives aimed at enhancing the environmental awareness of the industry and to take advantage of the increased environmental management and marketing opportunities provided by sustainable tourism voluntary certification schemes. UNEP, UNWTO and FEE invited Caribbean environment and tourism stakeholders to participate in a Feasibility Evaluation Workshop held in Puerto Rico in December 1999. The region recognised the advantage of utilizing a scheme that is well known in Europe, a very important tourism source market for the Caribbean.

The original choice of a regional approach for development of criteria reflects the nature of the Caribbean Blue Flag Programme. It gave special consideration to regional standards, including those already adopted for water quality under the Aruba Protocol on Land-Based Sources and Activities of Marine Pollution to the Cartagena Convention. Furthermore, monitoring the health of coral reefs located in the vicinity of the beach reflects due regard given to critical habitats and environmental characteristics of the region. It also directly contributes to the implementation of another regional Protocol of the Cartagena Convention, the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW).

Subsequent production of a Caribbean feasibility study confirmed the eligibility and interest for a Blue Flag Programme in the Caribbean. As a region marked by Small Island Developing States, where beaches and coastal areas are crucial to socio-economic development, the Caribbean was the first such region to complete an evaluation of the applicability of the Blue Flag. As a result of the Puerto Rico meeting, beach criteria specific for the Caribbean were proposed and prepared. At this time an international set of criteria had not been developed. The region decided to directly adopt the European marina criteria for the Caribbean.

In May 2001, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), and the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CAST/CHA), with the support of FEE and UNEP, set the basis for the establishment of the Blue Flag Caribbean Consortium (BFCC). This became the regional interagency team responsible for the implementation of the Caribbean Blue Flag Programme. In October 2002, CCA (on behalf of the Caribbean Blue Flag Consortium) was formally accepted as a member of FEE as required by the statutes of this organisation.

The programme in the Caribbean was run regionally, with national operators and national juries reporting to the regional Blue Flag Caribbean Consortium and a regional Jury, who in turn communicated with the international actors. As of 2006, it was decided that this regional function was no longer necessary. Non-profit organisations in each country then prepared for FEE membership and assumed the responsibility of running the programme at the national levels.

Since the initial development of the programme in the area, criteria specific to this region have been adapted into the international set of beach criteria. This illustrates the adaptability of the Blue Flag programme on the international level, to embrace changes and developments as the programme spreads into new areas. It also reflects the strength of the international programme with a stable identity where certain regional variations can be worked into an existing framework, rather than becoming exceptions.

### *Canada: A Welcomed Community Actor*

In Canada, the Blue Flag Programme is run by the NGO and FEE member organisation, Environmental Defence. They have seen that the Blue Flag Programme provides a much welcomed focus on the quality of their beaches. Beginning in the City of Toronto, Ontario, which has had a reputation for poor recreational water quality, has enabled the Blue Flag Programme to establish an effective role as a third party monitor. Their interactive web site, www.blueflag.ca, which provides the most up to date water quality test results for beaches in the program, is an invaluable tool for public outreach and they are seeing an increase in visitors every year.

The additional criteria under environmental management, environmental education and safety have served to engage a broader cross-section of stakeholders in working together for a common goal. Interest in the program is growing and Environmental Defence is receiving help in promoting the program to new communities.

At Environmental Defence they see an opportunity to establish real community stewardship of beaches through the Blue Flag program. They are creating partnerships with groups involved in coastal management, organisations that support recreational beach activities, and small NGOs that foster awareness and educational programs for their local beach.

# 8. Lessons Learned

Eco-labels (or awards) can play two main roles: serve as a mechanism to guide industry actors to improve their performance by providing defined operational guidelines and serve as a communication tool for consumers in highlighting products and services that have met or exceeded a set of defined criteria.

The example of the Blue Flag Programme starting in Europe, based on almost 20 years of experience, has demonstrated improvements not only in the direct management of beaches, marinas and boat activity, but also the management of coastal zones as a whole, where they are implemented.

The holistic approach to the management of coastal areas, which was gradually pursued as the Programme matured and expanded, has proven to be a key factor helping to turn sustainable development principles into practice.

It has served as a vehicle to enhance government commitment, drive the industry beyond legislative compliance and materialize crucial public-private partnerships, all of which have been fundamental to sustain the Programme itself and set the path towards sustainability.

As a result, Blue Flag beaches and marinas are synonymous with quality, and thus responsive to ever increasing tourist demands and expectations for a healthy environment.

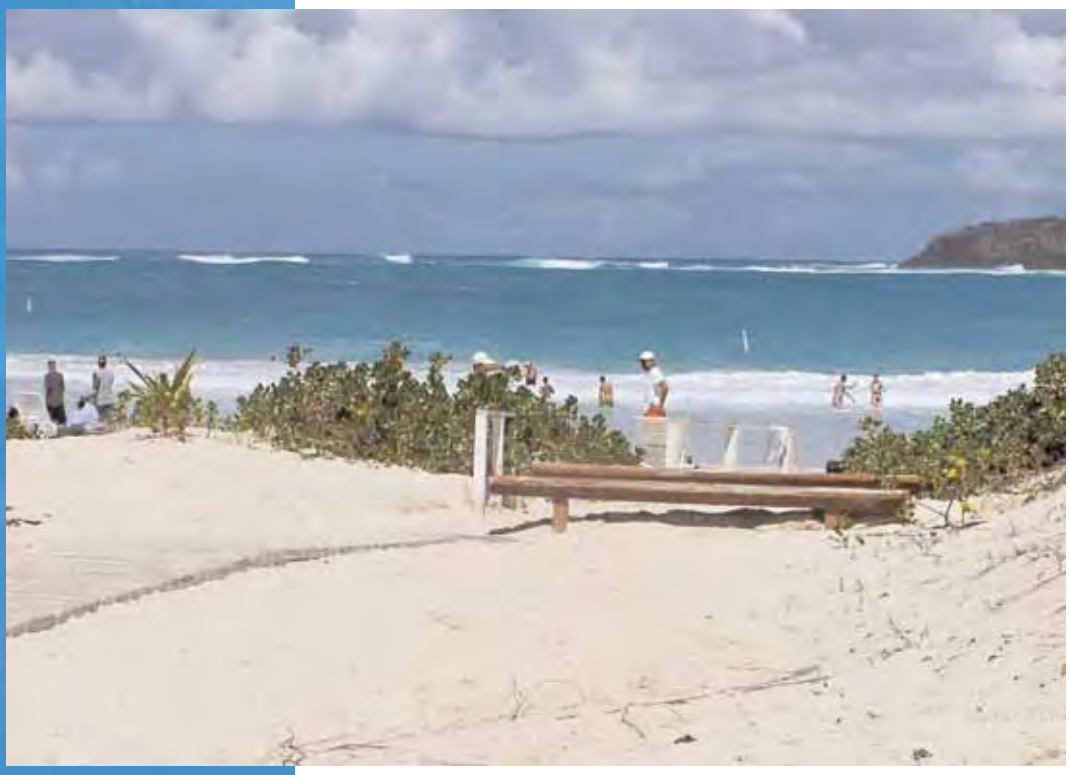
It is important to note that in the process of adapting and establishing a new Blue Flag Programme, national and local characteristics along with social and environmental differences need to be respected. Regular meetings of National Committees in the start up phase are essential, as are Blue Flag workshops. As the programme spreads to new areas, the relevance of the existing international criteria will be continually evaluated and perhaps, added to.

Regional characteristics must equally be considered. In the Caribbean for example, coral reefs and mangroves are an important and unique characteristic of the environment. Criteria to assure the protection, monitoring, and education of these areas was included into the criteria for this region.

Among the challenges faced in adopting the Programme to new countries is the need to devise creative modalities and partnerships to fill gaps in technical resources and monitoring capacities in the initial stages of development. Additionally, raising public awareness and understanding of voluntary initiatives, their benefits and potential weaknesses, are also crucial to their success and credibility.

In summary, the Blue Flag Programme:

- Can be instrumental in improving compliance at the local level with national and regional environmental legislation and policies, and coastal regulatory instruments
- Offers an opportunity to strengthen existing local and national capacities for coastal zone management
- Can be a tool to formulate and strengthen objectives for national, regional and local policies and actions related to the management of the coastal zone for tourism and socio-economic development
- Provides networking opportunities on the national and international levels, between organisations, authorities, education institutions, industries and other experts, to name a few
- Provides a framework within which public, private and community organisations can interact and cooperate toward common goals related to the environment, safety and education
- Provides a platform for discussion and conflict resolution surrounding the management of coastal zones and other community environmental initiatives



# Annex

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International Blue Flag Coordination: Finn Bolding Thomsen or Carrie A. Dean

Contacts for all other FEE and Blue Flag member organisations can be found on the websites:
www.fee-international.org
www.blueflag.org

## Organisations and further reading

The United Nations Environment Programme – Division of Technology, Industry and Economics. A Division of UNEP that works with governments, local authorities and industries (including tourism) to promote policies and practices that are cleaner and safer, make efficient use of natural resources, ensure adequate management of chemicals, incorporate environmental costs and reduce pollution and risks to humans and the environment (http://www.unep.org).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation – An intergovernmental organisation that serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism expertise, supporting the sustainable development of tourism and providing technical assistance to developing countries. Since 2003, UNWTO has become a Specialised Agency of the United Nations (http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable).

Caribbean Environment Programme – Promotes regional co-operation in 32 member countries for the protection and development of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region and serves as Secretariat to UNEP´s administered Cartagena Convention (http://www.cep.unep.org).

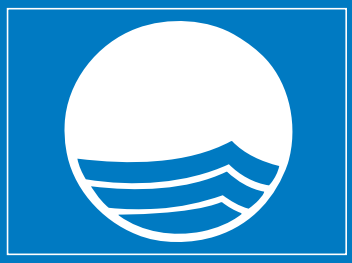
The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) – tourism development agency comprising 33 member governments from the French, English, Spanish and Dutch speaking Caribbean, as well as private sector organisations, with headquarters in Barbados and marketing operations in New York, London and Toronto (http:// www.onecaribbean.org).

The Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) – oldest environmental regional body in the Caribbean (38 years old), 18 Caribbean governments, 19 NGO's, several hundred individual and corporate members (http://www.caribbeanconservation.org).

The Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST)- the environmental arm of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) for the promotion of environmental management actions in Caribbean hotels (http:// www.cha-cast.com).

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) – works to support and help coordinate lifesaving development activities of member federations and regions (http://www.ilsf.org).

Reef Check – Dedicated to global coral reef education, monitoring and management (http://reefcheck.org).



# Measuring System
## for Beach Litter

ANWB

NederlandSchoon

# Credits

The 'Measuring System for Beach Litter' was developed by the Hague-based Stichting Nederland Schoon (The Keep Holland Tidy Foundation) and the Royal Dutch Touring Club ANWB. It is based on the publication 'Afrekenen met zwerfafval. Een werkmethode om zwerfafval te meten en aan te pakken' (CROW/NederlandSchoon, April 2003, "Let's get rid of litter, a working method to measure, avoid and eliminate it.")

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August 2006

# **Measuring System** for Beach Litter

Litter in this context is understood to mean mainly personal waste physically discarded by people or left behind at places not designated for this purpose and all the various sorts of waste that end up in public places due to the indirect doings or negligence of people.

Stichting NederlandSchoon - Keep Holland Tidy
The Hague
August 2006

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# Summary



Litter is a problem across much of today's society. It is common, current and complex. For everyone's sake it deserves to be tackled. The measuring system presented in this publication offers an objective method of mapping the status of litter. The heart of the system is formed by a standard set of photos, which is used to determine whether a beach is 'clean' or 'dirty'. The system also differentiates between bulky and fine beach litter.

## NederlandSchoon - Keep Holland Tidy

The organisation NederlandSchoon is committed to preventing and fighting litter across the Netherlands. The foundation was established in 1991 by a consortium of business, government and interest groups including the national motoring support organisation the ANWB. NederlandSchoon promotes the values of a clean living environment. The litter challenge is addressed by working towards better public facilities, stimulating effective controls and encouraging sanctions against offenders. And by providing information and exerting a positive influence on all who may cause litter.

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## Royal Dutch Touring Club ANWB

The Royal Dutch Touring Club ANWB offers a wide range of services related to roadside assistance and medical and repatriation assistance abroad, legal assistance, travel, information products, insurances, selling travel related products, and many other products and services in the areas of recreation, tourism and mobility and ANWB is active in lobbying in the fields of car driving, mobility, travel and recreation.

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# Foreword



We are pleased to present the English version of the standard beach litter evaluation method. This beach litter standard has made possible the measurement of beach cleanliness without concern for what beach, what litter and who measures it. This has in turn created a stronger foundation of cooperation between the ANWB and NederlandSchoon.

We hope that this will be another step towards cleaner, litter-free beaches in the near future.

**Guido van Woerkom**
President and CEO
Royal Dutch Touring Club ANWB

**Marielle van Aggelen**
Managing Director NederlandSchoon
Keep Holland Tidy

1

# The system



## 1.1 Introduction

Nearly everyone is irritated by litter, but every individual has their own perception of what 'dirty' and 'clean' precisely mean. This also applies to managers of beaches. This personal interpretation process makes measuring and determining the quantity or status of litter needlessly complicated. The 'Measuring System for Beach Litter' is a system by which everyone can judge a situation according to the same standards, and thus wear the same 'glasses' as it were. The measuring system ensures objective assessment and a standard description of beach litter.

## 1.2 Cleanliness levels

The heart of the system is formed by five cleanliness levels.

**Table 1: Classification in cleanliness levels**

| Cleanliness level | Description |
|---|---|
| A+ | Very clean |
| A | Clean |
| B | Moderately clean |
| C | Dirty |
| D | Very dirty |

## 1.3 Images, counts and descriptions

In the Measuring System for Beach Litter the cleanliness levels have been laid down in images, counts and descriptions.

Traditionally there are two methods for measuring litter.
The first is based on images - the qualitative method. The second is based on actually counting the number of items of litter found - the quantitative method. Both offer advantages and drawbacks. The quantitative method provides harder data, but is labour intensive and raises questions about types of litter. The qualitative or photographic method is more closely in line with the public perception and is less labour intensive, but the comparison of images with the actual situation sometimes raises discussion.

The measuring system shown here combines the qualitative and quantitative methods thus benefiting from the strong points of both. Research has confirmed a clear relationship between the two methods and that combining them is an obvious way of benefiting from their individual advantages.

**Images**

Photos have been made of all kinds of beach litter situations in the Netherlands, but in principle they also apply to other countries as beaches everywhere show strong similarities. The photos are on the CD-ROM. This Image set provides pictures with which one can measure and record the litter status of beaches anywhere.

The system also distinguishes between bulky litter and fine litter:

- Bulky litter is understood to mean litter with a height, breadth, length and/or diameter larger than or equal to 10 cm, not large household waste (which is considered to be all that larger than 50 litre plastic bags). The photos used to describe bulky litter status cover a surface area of 100 $m^2$.
- Fine litter is understood to mean litter with a height, breadth, length and/or diameter of less than 10 cm and larger or equal to 1 cm, but excluding chewing gum. The photos used to describe fine litter cover a surface area of 1 $m^2$.

The images on the CD are subdivided into reference images and other images. The references are used as standards of comparison. The other images are used as material to practice with the system. The reference pictures are summarised in the enclosed litter indicator.

**Counts and descriptions**

Simultaneously with the photos of the different litter situations, the number of items of bulky litter in an area of 100 $m^2$ and the number of items of fine litter per 1 $m^2$ were recorded.

In this measuring system the litter counts support the pictures. The table below shows per cleanliness level the average quantity of litter per unit area. The data apply to both bulky and fine litter. With regard to bulky litter, descriptions have been added to the pictures and counts of the various litter status.

**Table 2: Number of units per cleanliness level for bulky and fine litter**

| Cleanliness level | | Number of units of litter per 100 $m^2$ (bulky litter) or per 1 $m^2$ (fine litter*) | Description of bulky litter |
|---|---|---|---|
| A+ | Very clean | 0 | No visible litter. |
| A | Clean | 1-3 | At first glance no litter, but can be sometimes detected when looking closely. |
| B | Moderately clean | 4-10 | 'Several' items of litter spread here and there on the beach. |
| C | Dirty | 11-25 | A significant part of the beach contains litter. |
| D | Very dirty | ►25 | Litter nearly everywhere in all shapes and sizes. |

The litter indicator shows per cleanliness level an overview of the reference picture for bulky litter, fine litter and the number of units of litter per unit area.

The chosen method depends on the situation. The photos can be used to establish the cleanliness level in practice. The counts are mainly used in cases where it is unclear with which photo it corresponds. The descriptions can be used as a supplement to the information.

**Environmental and personal perception factors**

The public's general perception of quality of public spaces is not just determined by litter, but also by factors such as graffiti, the state of a beach path or duckboards, or the state of repair of litterbins. It is therefore useful to have people involved in the removal of litter fulfil an observer's function with regard to these factors. In measuring beach litter only these factors should be ignored, but in evaluating beach improvement programmes they should not.

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# Measuring



To show cleanliness levels and their change with time requires measuring the amount of litter on location and at different times. To do this observers must be specially trained. And because assessing cleanliness levels on what can be a large beach is time consuming it must be assessed by sampling. So-called measuring surfaces are used to do this. For bulky litter surfaces of 100 $m^2$ are used and for fine litter surfaces of 1$m^2$.

This chapter successively discusses preparations for actual measurements, the field-work and the assessment of the results of the fieldwork.

## 2.1 Preparations

Preparations for the fieldwork:
- Allow observers to practise with the measuring system
- Determine the measuring surfaces
- Determine the measuring days
- Determine the measuring time
- Determine the number of measuring rounds
- Compile the registration form

**Observers practice**

The observers must learn to assess litter status using the Measuring System for Beach Litter. It is therefore recommended organising practice meetings, during which observers learn to award a cleanliness level to a particular litter situation.

The practice meeting begins with a presentation of the reference pictures. The Image set for beaches on the enclosed CD-ROM is used for this. This version is currently only available in Dutch, however few words are needed, so it is easily useable by everyone. Follow the instructions to use the CD-ROM (the Dutch words on the CD-ROM are shown below in quotation marks):

1. Place the CD-ROM in the PC, the CD-ROM starts automatically
2. Click on 'normbijeenkomst'
3. Click on 'beeldenset'
4. Click on 'stranden'
5. To choose pictures of bulky litter click 'grof'
6. To choose pictures of fine litter click 'fijn'

The presentation starts for both bulky and fine litter by showing the reference pictures, in order from very clean (A+) to very dirty (D).

This is followed by the other pictures on the CD-ROM for bulky and fine litter. A random sequence has been determined for the other pictures. The participants must give scores for fine and bulky litter. The participants note down the awarded scores on a form included as appendix in this manual. The meeting coordinator has their own score form, showing the code and the cleanliness level for each image. A model score form is also included as appendix.

The scores are discussed in a short debate. Experience shows that differences of opinion can occur, but that the bandwidth or range these cover is relatively limited. If necessary, the reference pictures can be shown again and the exercise with the other images can be repeated. The aim is for the observers to be able to properly distinguish between the cleanliness levels and to accurately allocate to these a litter status.

When the observers are ready, an exercise follows on a part of the beach. The observers learn to determine the measuring surfaces and the cleanliness levels on location and to establish and record areas of $100m^2$ and $1m^2$.

The observers are equipped with a registration form and the litter indicator. The form is for noting down results, the indicator to enable the observers to calibrate themselves.

This manual now continues with an explanation of other preparations for the fieldwork. Part of this explanation, such as determining the measuring surfaces, can be done in the practice meeting.

**Determining measuring surfaces**

- Make sure you have a map of the beach.
- Mark all specific areas on the map with a different colour. For example beaches yellow, access points red and through roads blue.
- Determine the number of surfaces: in principle one measuring surface of 100 $m^2$ per hectare (10,000 $m^2$).
- Within each type of area, assign the number of measuring surfaces by 'pricking' these on the map. Place marks on the map. On the beach, determine the exact position of the measuring surfaces.
- Number all marks made.
- In order to evaluate a beach you must select at least 20 measuring surfaces, which are proportionately divided over unpaved and paved surface areas if any.

**Measuring frequency**

- Decide the number of measuring rounds on which you want to base the measurement.

  Explanation: This is usually a financial decision: measuring costs time and so also money. Since the litter status can show large differences over time, at least two measuring rounds should be performed per (predetermined) period. The number of measuring rounds can be further expanded as desired (for example, evaluate all measuring surfaces twice a week in four consecutive weeks).

- Decide the number of days you need to evaluate all selected measuring surfaces once. The first time you visit all measuring surfaces to evaluate them you will require a lot of time. It is estimated that one can visit, describe and evaluate around 30 measuring surfaces per day.
  With experience and practice, the number of measuring surfaces can increased to 50 per day.
- Decide the days on which the measurements are to be conducted.
  - Preferably on fixed days, for example as a function of the beach cleaning times.
  - If a fixed date is not possible with regard to cleaning, then measure the selected measuring surfaces on a random day and time. For the next measuring round measure the surfaces on a different day and time.

- Compile a registration form on which you have named and characterised the points from the random check. (This simplifies fieldwork: the data only need to be checked and possibly corrected).
- Reserve space on the form to note down the results and circumstances on the beach (for example, crowded or not crowded), under which the measurements are conducted.

  Note this data will allow the observer to track similar circumstances in a follow-up measurement.
- An example of a registration form is shown as appendix (page 16).

## 2.2 Fieldwork

To conduct the fieldwork the observer has the map, the registration form and the litter indicator.

On the beach:

- The observer examines the map with its selected measuring surfaces and wishes with regard to the measuring day and measuring time.
- The observer determines a practical route to visit all the selected points.
- At point X:
  - The observer checks the description and character of this point, as indicated on the registration form. He or she corrects the data shown if necessary.
  - The observer decides per measuring point which 100 $m^2$ of measuring surface is to be evaluated.

  - The observer determines the length of the measuring surface on the basis of the breadth which he or she has chosen to reach a total surface area of 100 $m^2$.
- The observer determines the cleanliness level per measuring surface by comparing the situation with the reference pictures for bulky litter for beaches.
- If the reference pictures are unusable due to the presence of obstacles (for example advertising boards or construction work) then the observer determines the number of units of bulky litter and the cleanliness level on the basis of the result.
- For fine litter the observer seeks out the dirtiest area of 1 $m^2$ within the area of 100 $m^2$ just measured. The observer walks to this dirtiest area looks straight down from the spot where he or she is measuring and also determines the cleanliness level. To do this the observer compares the encountered situation with the reference pictures for fine litter.
- The observer notes down the circumstances during the measurement on the registration form.
- In case of doubt or to prevent discussions about the quality of the measuring surface, the observer takes a photograph.

The following rules of thumb apply to taking photos of bulky litter which are comparable with the reference pictures:
- use a tripod at a height of around 1.65 m;
- hold the camera aiming slightly down (angle 80-85 degrees);
- make sure the air/land ratio is around 1 to 4.

The situation for fine litter can also be recorded with a photo. To take photos that are comparable with the reference pictures the photo must be taken at a right angle to the surface. The photo must cover a surface area of around 1 m2.

  - The observer clearly indicates which measuring surface he or she is taking a photo of on the registration form and notes the photo number (with an analogue camera: possibly also the number of the roll of film).

## 2.3 Evaluation

The results of the measurements are transferred from the registration form onto a spreadsheet, say Excel. To calculate the results, the evaluations are converted into scores in Excel.

**Table 3: Translating cleanliness level into a score**

| Cleanliness level per measuring round | Report score |
|---|---|
| A+ | 10 |
| A | 8 |
| B | 6 |
| C | 4 |
| D | 2 |

Count the scores and subsequently divide by the number of measuring points to determine the average score per measuring round.

**Example**

| Measuring round 1 | Evaluation Bulky litter | Score Bulky | Evaluation Fine litter | Score Fine | | Evaluation Bulky litter | Score Bulky | Evaluation Fine litter | Score Fine |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measuring surface 1 | A | 8 | C | 4 | Measuring surface 11 | A | 8 | C | 4 |
| 2 | B | 6 | C | 4 | 12 | A+ | 10 | C | 4 |
| 3 | C | 4 | C | 4 | 13 | A+ | 10 | C | 4 |
| 4 | C | 4 | C | 4 | 14 | A+ | 10 | B | 6 |
| 5 | A | 8 | B | 6 | 15 | A | 8 | B | 6 |
| 6 | B | 6 | B | 6 | 16 | A | 8 | B | 4 |
| 7 | B | 6 | B | 6 | 17 | A | 8 | B | 4 |
| 8 | A | 8 | B | 6 | 18 | B | 6 | B | 4 |
| 9 | A | 8 | C | 4 | 19 | A | 8 | B | 6 |
| 10 | A | 8 | B | 6 | 20 | C | 4 | C | 4 |
| | | | | | Total | | 144 | | 96 |
| | | | | | Average | | 7,2 | | 4,9 |

These can be put in a diagram, and by counting the results of the measuring rounds the average cleanliness level over longer periods can be established. This is as follows: Combine the different measuring rounds

**Example**

| | Measuring rounds (in practice 12, here as example 4) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Report scores bulky litter | 7,2 | 7,9 | 8,4 | 8,5 | 32 |
| **Total average bulky** | | | | | **8** |
| Report scores fine litter | 4,9 | 5,1 | 4,8 | 4,9 | 19,7 |
| **Total average fine** | | | | | **4,9** |

Follow the next step if you want to combine the results of several areas (for example all the beaches of a city or province):

**Report scores for various areas over several measuring rounds**

| Beach | Score |
|---|---|
| X | 8 |
| Y | 7,2 |
| Z | 7,9 |
| **Average score** | **7,7** |

# Score form 'normbijeenkomst' participants (participants intro meet)

Date: _/_/_
Participant's name:

On the score form indicate the score per picture. Note down any comments.
These can be used during the debate on the problems of litter.

| Picture number | Score bulky litter | Score fine litter | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | | | |
| 12 | | | |
| 13 | | | |
| 14 | | | |
| 15 | | | |
| 16 | | | |
| 17 | | | |
| 18 | | | |
| 19 | | | |
| 20 | | | |
| 21 | | | |
| 22 | | | |
| 23 | | | |
| 24 | | | |
| 25 | | | |
| | | | |

# Coordinator's Score form

Date: _/_/_
Name:

This score form for the litter coordinator contains the cleanliness levels awarded to the pictures in accordance with the standardisation system. The pictures on the CD-ROM are shown in random order, with the exception of the reference pictures.

## Bulky litter

| Picture number | Reference picture | Other picture | Cleanliness level |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | X | | A+ |
| 2 | X | | A |
| 3 | X | | B |
| 4 | X | | C |
| 5 | X | | D |
| 6 | | X | D |
| 7 | | X | A+ |
| 8 | | X | C |
| 9 | | X | A+ |
| 10 | | X | B |
| 11 | | X | A |
| 12 | | X | C |
| 13 | | X | B |
| 14 | | X | A |
| 15 | | X | B |
| 16 | | X | C |
| 17 | | X | A |
| 18 | | X | A+ |
| 19 | | X | D |

## Fine litter

| Picture number | Reference picture | Other picture | Cleanliness level |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | X | | A+ |
| 2 | X | | A |
| 3 | X | | B |
| 4 | X | | C |
| 5 | X | | D |
| 6 | | X | B |
| 7 | | X | A |
| 8 | | X | A+ |

# Registration form

Date:

Conducted by:

Weather conditions:

Location:

Photo no:

Comments:

| Measuring point | Score bulky litter | Score fine litter |
|---|---|---|
| Number | | |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | | |
| 13 | | |
| 14 | | |
| 15 | | |
| 16 | | |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | | |
| 19 | | |
| 20 | | |
| | | |

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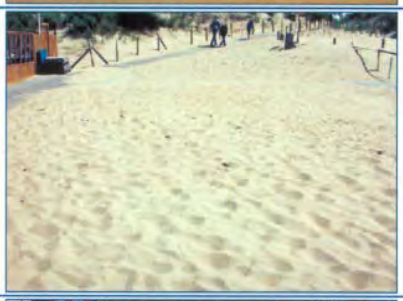
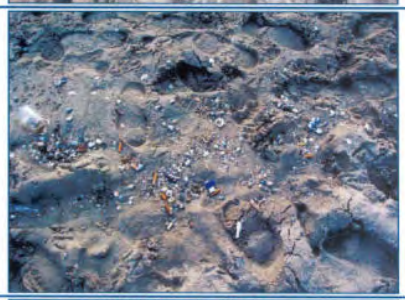
Website www.anwb.nl

# Beach litter indicator

| Cleanliness level | Bulky litter (>10 cm) per 100 m² | | Fine litter (<10 cm) per ~~100 m²~~ 1 m² | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A+ | | ◦ Very clean<br>◦ 0 units of litter<br>◦ No visible litter | | ◦ Very clean<br>◦ 0 units of litter |
| A |  | ◦ Clean<br>◦ 1-3 units of litter<br>◦ At first glance no litter, but it can sometimes been seen if you look closer | | ◦ Clean<br>◦ 1-3 units of litter |
| B | | ◦ Moderately clean<br>◦ 4-10 units of litter<br>◦ Several items of litter spread here and there on the beach | | ◦ Moderately clean<br>◦ 4-10 units of litter |
| C | | ◦ Dirty<br>◦ 11-25 units of litter<br>◦ A significant part of the beach contains litter |  | ◦ Dirty<br>◦ 11-25 units of litter |
| D | | ◦ Very dirty<br>◦ > 25 units of litter<br>◦ Litter nearly everywhere in all shapes and sizes | | ◦ Very dirty<br>◦ > 25 units of litter |

NederlandSchoon

# Annual Report **2008**

FOUNDATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

FEE

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# FOUNDATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (FEE)

FEE is an international organisation that has been promoting environmental education for sustainable development since 1981.

FEE is active in environmental education mainly through five programmes:
- Blue Flag (www.blueflag.org)
- Eco-Schools (www.eco-schools.org)
- Young Reporters for the Environment (www.youngreporters.org)
- Learning about Forests (www.leaf-international.org)
- The Green Key (www.green-key.org)

Through formal school education, training of staff and awareness raising, FEE's programmes involve people of all ages and nationalities.

This FEE Annual Report informs you about the main activities in 2008 related to FEE and its five programmes.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 2008, FEE held two successful environmental education conferences with partners. One conference was organised with ISESCO (The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) attended by representatives from 15 countries. Another large conference was organised jointly with UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) having around 100 representatives from 21 countries participating.

FEE entered corporate agreements with a number of large companies in 2008: Corona Extra, Panasonic and Toyota Motor Europe (second phase). FEE furthermore has agreements with a number of smaller companies. We are very fortunate to have these companies working with us and I would like to thank them for their support to the FEE programmes.

FEE continued to grow in 2008 with new member organisations. By the end of the year, FEE had 65 member organisations from 57 countries. I regret that our member organisation from Estonia had to leave FEE in 2008, but it is my belief that strict membership rules are necessary to keep FEE strong for the continued development and consolidation of the organisation.

Jan Eriksen
President, FEE

# MESSAGE FROM THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

Environmental education is central to equip countries and communities to achieve more resource efficient, low carbon Green Economies that sets the stage for a sustainable 21st century.

UNEP was delighted to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with FEE in 2003 to collaborate on school-based and tourism-related environmental education programmes.

To revitalize our collaboration UNEP and FEE jointly organized the "Conference on Cooperation and Best Practice for Education for Sustainable Development: The North-South Experience" in 2008 which was a living proof of these closer ties.

The conference brought together 100 participants from more than 20 countries to establish working partnerships between stakeholders in Europe and Africa. In doing so it catalyzed UNEP's and FEE's inclusive vision to inform, educate and work with government, private sector and civil society.

Education can assist societies to meet the challenges while realizing the opportunities from a development path that fosters environmental integrity, decent employment, social justice and sustainable livelihoods.

UNEP looks forward to deepening our partnership with FEE and others in order to widen the knowledge base upon which sound environmental decision-making and action are anchored.

Achim Steiner
UN Under-Secretary
Executive Director, UNEP

# FEE SECRETARIAT

**ABOUT FEE**

The Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is an international organisation promoting sustainable development through environmental education.
FEE actively promotes and delivers environmental education through its five programmes.
The programmes are implemented and administered by the national member organisations in 57 countries around the world.

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Web: www.fee-international.org

In 2008, FEE had new member organisations from Northern Ireland, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and USA. FEE decided to have two separate delegations from Belgium: a new member organisation from Belgium-Wallonia and the existing Belgian member representing Belgium-Flanders. Furthermore, this year nine organisations joined FEE as affiliate members.

A successful General Assembly was held in Kendal, England, setting a new record number of participants. Three representatives from organisations outside Europe were elected for the FEE Executive Board 2008/2009. Administratively, the International Green Key Coordination moved from France to the Netherlands by the end of 2008.

The environmental policy for FEE was decided upon in 2008 to be implemented in FEE internationally as well as in the national member organisations. Funding from $CO_2$ compensation of flights was entered into FEE's $CO_2$ Fund, resulting in a number of schools from various countries receiving funding for tree planting of school forests when combined with environmental education activities.

FEE is currently establishing a FEE Donation Shop (www.donationshop.org) where people can support school projects, including environmental education activities, and ensure $CO_2$ compensation from travelling.

## FEE AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: JOINT FEE-UNEP CONFERENCE

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and FEE organised a joint conference on education for sustainable development.

"The UNEP-FEE conference on cooperation and best practice for Education for Sustainable Development: The North-South Experience" took take place in Nairobi, Kenya, on 28-29 October 2008. The conference was attended by approximately 100 participants from 21 countries.

The first day of the conference introduced the education for sustainable development programmes of FEE and UNEP and presented examples of north-south cooperation and public-NGO partnerships. The second day of the conference was used as a workshop with smaller groups discussing cooperation on the programmes and defining action plans for future cooperation. The conference was very useful for networking, benefiting the future for education for sustainable development and FEE involvement on the African continent.

# ECO-SCHOOLS

The Dominican Republic, Japan, Jordan and Tunisia joined the Eco-Schools Programme in 2008 and Northern Ireland became an independent delegation. This means that the Eco-Schools Programme is now active in 44 countries, involving more than 27,000 schools, 392,000 teachers, 4,900 local authorities and 6,375,000 students (Source: Annual Reports 2007/2008).
The 2008 Eco-Schools national operator meeting took place in Rabat, Morocco on 20-21 November 2008 and it was co-organized by the Eco-Schools International Coordination and the Fondation Mohammed VI Pour la Protection de L'Environnement (FEE Morocco). It involved 57 people from 42 national delegations and consisted of two days of fruitful discussion of programme related issues including training opportunities for the pilot countries.

The Environment and Innovation Programme is now running in 6 countries (Denmark, Finland, Italy, Portugal, Turkey and Norway) with the theme "Climate Change: Let's Save Energy!". Toyota Motor Europe, via the Toyota Fund for Europe, continues to Support the Eco-Schools Programme.

### ABOUT ECO-SCHOOLS

Eco-Schools is an International Programme that certifies school achievements of environmental education and management standards by awarding them the Green Flag.
The Programme's methodology consists of seven steps based on ISO14001/EMAS standards, demanding the involvement of the whole school and encouraging students to take part in decision-making processes.

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### ECO-SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: IMPROVING LEARNING CONDITIONS IN KIBERA SCHOOL IN KENYA

The Mashimoni Primary School, in the Kibera Slum in Kenya is committed to education for sustainable development through implementation of the Eco-School Programme (coordinated by KOEE/FEE Kenya)
The Mashimoni Primary School started at a nursery level in 1980. It was a community initiative to promote access to learning facilities within the informal settlement and to address slum challenges associated with lack of basic education such as poverty, malnutrition, unemployment and poor sanitary conditions.

The School promotes access to basic education thereby enhancing positive transformation among the young generation. Also, the school conducts school-community awareness campaigns to address issues such as poverty, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, the school plays a key role in the lives of 30% of its population whom are orphaned children.

Eco-Schools

# THE GREEN KEY

**ABOUT GREEN KEY**

The Green Key is an international eco-label awarded to tourist accommodations. It has been a FEE Programme since 2002. The Green Key promotes the implementation of environmental standards and aims at educating tourists, staff and administrators of tourist facilities.

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In 2008 the Green Key increased to 642 tourist accommodations in 13 countries, and new countries had their national criteria approved. This means that the Programme is now running in Belgium-Flanders, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, and Tunisia.

Many other countries have shown their interest in Green-Key, e.g. Spain, Jordan, Belgium-Wallonia, Croatia, Greece, Puerto Rico and Jamaica. This means that the Programme is increasing not only in Europe, but also in other parts of the world.

2008 was the last year that FEE France hosted the International Coordination of Green Key. FEE Netherlands has taken over the work by 1 January 2009 with Erik van Dijk as the new International Coordinator.

The goal of the Programme is to reduce each facility's impact on the environment by engaging the facility's management in the implementation of sustainable on-site practices and by offering environmental education opportunities to staff and guests. An important element in strengthening the environmental education component is to cooperate with the environmental and nature organisations in the vicinity of the facility.

Until 2008, the Green Key Programme worked solely with international criteria for sustainable management and environmental education for hotels and campsites. In response to a request from FEE member organisations, it was decided in 2008 that a new set of criteria can be developed for other kinds of tourist facilities like restaurants or attractions. Another important issue in 2008 was the cooperation with international hotel chains, giving the Green Key worldwide new opportunities.

The Green Key

## THE GREEN KEY AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: COOPERATION ON AWARENESS RAISING

When we talk about education in the Green Key there are three partners: the owner and employees, the guests and the educators in the surrounding area/community.

FEE Netherlands and "Natuurmonumenten" are working on a model to build a relationship between these partners with a "special arrangement". This arrangement will be a tool:

- to explain the values in and around the Green Key facility,
- to increase the cooperation between the owner and the educator in the area/community
- to offer a special experience to the guests in the Green Key accommodations with a financial benefit for the owner and the educator.

With this model we increase the awareness of staff and guests about the value of their surroundings and we increase the relationship with "Natuurmonumenten".

# YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) Programme continued its growth in 2008 and now counts 17 countries in the network. Brazil, China, New Zealand and Wales are joining the Programme and have started their pilot year in 2008.

FEEE France will be hosting the International Coordination until 2012. Sophie Bachet is the new International Coordinator replacing Thierry Lerévérend from May 2008.

A four-year action plan was adopted from which significant issues for the programme were prioritised, such as strengthening communication, enlarging the network and finding international sponsors.

The "YRE book 2008" gathered the best journalistic productions of the international network, which entered the YRE International Jury in May. It has been sent to all participating countries and copies are still available!

The 2008 national operator meeting took place in Morocco, back to back with the Eco-Schools meeting. 14 countries were represented and worked together on issues related to YRE, for example the adoption of "Biodiversity" as a new theme.

On technical aspects, YRE adopted its new logo, and the international website has seen the number of visitors increasing from 715,000 in 2007 to 947,000 this year!

### ABOUT YRE

YRE is developed in 17 countries. Around 500 projects were completed in 2008, involving more than 12,000 pupils. The 7 topics that are being investigated are agriculture, cities, climate change, coastline, energy, waste and water. The objectives of every project are to investigate a local environmental issue, produce information in a journalistic manner and communicate the results to a local audience. The mission of Young Reporters for the Environment is to foster understanding, inspire action and create positive communicators about environmental problems and solutions.

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Web: www.youngreporters.org

### YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: "WHY OUR SCHOOL DOESN'T RECYCLE"

We are a catering school and we cook food and pastry for clients, so we produce a lot of organic waste and throw away a lot of packaging. We realized that our school does not have a lot of initiatives to treat them. That is why we have decided to launch a project to be greener, starting actions in our school, then in our family and finally opening them to the outside world. Our project aims at raising the awareness of people about the environment and encouraging actions to be greener. Several activities were launched to change the situation. We worked together with a Moroccan school in Rabat to exchange experiences and change our habits concerning the environment.

*By Lycée Professionnel Hôtelier "les Petites Bruyères", Saint Chamond, France*

Young Reporters
*for the environment*

# BLUE FLAG

## ABOUT BLUE FLAG

The Blue Flag is an international eco-label awarded to beaches and marinas that meet a specific set of criteria within the areas of water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and services.

International Blue Flag Coordination
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Web: www.blueflag.org

More than 3,200 beaches and marinas in 37 countries around the world received the Blue Flag award in 2008, and the interest for Blue Flag continues to grow: Tunisia raised their first Blue Flag at a marina. Aruba, Brazil and Malta had sites in the pilot phase of the Programme. Other countries starting the implementation of the Blue Flag Programme in 2008 were Belgium-Wallonia, Jordan, FYR Macedonia, Sint Maarten, Turks & Caicos Islands, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates

The annual Blue Flag national operator meeting was held in October in Antalya, Turkey. Major points of discussion during the year included the continued consolidation of the various areas of the Blue Flag Programme, beach safety and the revision of the bathing water quality criterion to one harmonised Blue Flag standard worldwide.

Blue Flag would like to thank our corporate sponsors for their continued support throughout the year. A special thanks to Corona Extra as a new partner with Blue Flag on the Corona-Save-the-Beach Campaign.

## BLUE FLAG AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AWARENESS RAISING AT BLUE FLAG BEACHES AND MARINAS

The Blue Flag Programme is continuously working on increasing knowledge about sustainable development issues among beach/marina users and staff working at the sites.

In 2008, a working party of various Blue Flag national operators gathered best practices on how to make informative and educative maps and information boards for the Blue Flag beaches and marinas with precise and educative information.

We are furthermore continuing our focus on the environmental education activities taking place at Blue Flag beaches and marinas. In New Zealand, Blue Flag in 2008 entered a cooperation with the national "Seaweek" initiative on a range of environmental education activities aimed at awareness raising of the public on coastal issues.

# LEARNING ABOUT FORESTS

2008 was a year of rebuilding the Learning about Forests (LEAF) Programme. A new vision and mission, revised criteria as well as new objectives and an action plan for the next four year have been produced. Several new countries are interested in the LEAF network and by the end of the year 12 countries were participating. The LEAF programme coordinator has been active in the European network of Forest Pedagogics and several countries joining this network are interested in joining the LEAF Programme.

The LEAF national operator meeting was arranged in March in Biri, Norway. The main themes related to the further development of the program with the main focus on our new theme "Bio-energy from forests".

LEAF administrates the FEE $CO_2$ Fund. It has established procedures for application which are now available at the FEE website. Four projects received grants to plant school forests in 2008.

With strong support of FEE Japan, the LEAF Programme has established a sponsorship agreement with Panasonic Japan. According to this agreement LEAF will in 2009 organise the planting of 253,000 trees in collaboration with about 800 schools in 30 countries.

### ABOUT LEAF

LEAF reflects all the functions forests fulfill for people; cultural, ecological, economical and social. Understanding the balance between those uses is crucial when studying how humans interact with forests. Our vision is to see an increased level of awareness and knowledge of the use of forests and forestry.

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Web: www.leaf-international.org

### LEARNING ABOUT FORESTS AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: SCHOOL FORESTS AND FOREST PLANTING – THE BALANCE OF WOOD

When the trees are big enough to be harvested, we cut them and use the wood to build houses, make furniture or for energy. In the place of a harvested tree we plant a new one. The use of forest products contributes to fewer emissions from substitutes. Reforestation and sustainable forestry has a positive impact in the carbon balance. Knowledge and understanding of these processes is crucial for sustainable development.

LEARNING ABOUT FORESTS

# FEE MEMBER ORGANISATIONS (AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2008)

**FULL AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:**

**Bahamas:** Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation
**Belgium-Flanders:** Bond Beter Leefmilieu
**Belgium-Wallonia:** Inter-Environnement Wallonie
**Brazil:** Instituto Ambiental Ratones
**Bulgaria:** Bulgarian Blue Flag Movement
**Canada:** Environmental Defence Canada
**Chile:** Instituto de Ecología Política
**China:** Center for Environmental Education and Communications
**Croatia:** Association "Lijepa Nasa"
**Cyprus:** Cyprus Marine Environment Protection Association
**Czech Republic:** Tereza Association
**Denmark:** Friluftsrådet (Danish Outdoor Council)
**Dominican Republic:** Instituto de Derecho Ambiental de la Republica Dominicana
**England:** Encams
**Finland:** Pidä Saaristo Siistinä RY (Keep the Archipelago Tidy Association)
**France:** FEEE France
**Germany:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Umwelterziehung e.V.
**Greece:** Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature
**Iceland:** Landvernd
**Ireland:** An Taisce
**Italy:** FEE Italia
**Jamaica:** Negril area Environmental Protection Trust
**Japan:** FEE Japan
**Jordan:** The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan
**Kazakhstan:** EcoObraz
**Kenya:** Kenyan Organization for Environmental Education
**Latvia:** Vides izglitibas fonds / FEE Latvia
**Lithuania:** Lietuvos Zaliuju Judejimas (Lithuanian Green Movement)
**FYR Macedonia:** OXO
**Malta:** Nature Trust Malta
**Montenegro:** Environmental Consultancy of Montenegro
**Morocco:** Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement
**Netherlands:** FEE Netherlands
**New Zealand:** FEE-NZ
**Northern Ireland:** Tidy Northern Ireland
**Norway:** Stiftelsen FEE Norway
**Poland:** Fundacja Partnerstwo dla Srodowiska (Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation)
**Portugal:** ABAE / FEE Portugal
**Puerto Rico:** Organización Pro Ambiente Sustentable
**Romania:** Centrul Carpato-Danubian de Geoecologie
**Russia:** Keep St Petersburg Tidy
**Scotland:** Keep Scotland Beautiful
**Sint Maarten:** Environmental Protection in the Caribbean – Sint Maarten
**Slovakia:** Spirala
**Slovenia:** DOVES / FEE Slovenia
**South Africa:** Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
**Spain:** Asociación de Educación Ambiental y del Consumidor
**Sweden:** Håll Sverige Rent (Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation)
**Tunisia:** Association Tunisienne pour la Protection de la Nature et de l'Environnement
**Turkey:** Turkiye Cevre Egitim Vakfi
**United Arab Emirates:** Emirates Wildlife Society
**United States of America:** National Wildlife Federation
**Wales:** Keep Wales Tidy

**AFFILIATE MEMBERS:**

Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association
Dansk Skovforening (Danish Forestry Association)
Department of Environment and Coastal Resources, Turks & Caicos Islands
Dienst Doel Groepenbeleid, Natuur- en Milieueducatie
Enterprise Estonia
HORESTA
Rainforest Alliance
Skogan i Skolen (Forest in School)
Skogbrukets Kursinstitutt (Forestry Extension Institute)
Suomen Metsäyhdistys ry (Finnish Forest Association)
Sykse – Suomen Ympäristökasvatuksen Seura (Finnish Association for Environmental Education)

**HONORARY MEMBERS:**

Graham Ashworth
Ole Løvig Simonsen
Lauge Prip
Günter Eulefeld
Hans Ole Hansen
Jean Baptiste de Vilmorin

For more detailed contact information for FEE members, please visit the FEE website: www.fee-international.org (section: organisation).

## FEE EXECUTIVE BOARD 2008/2009

*From left:* Heiko Crost, Dirk Vercammen, Malcolm Powell, Lourdes Díaz, Jan Eriksen, Henny Kromhout and Sarah Winterton.

For more detailed contact information, please consult the FEE website: www.fee-international.org.

## FEE STAFF

*From left:* Bjørn Helge Bjørnstad (LEAF), Estela G. Pereira (Eco-Schools), Annie Gjedsted (FEE Secretary), Finn Bolding Thomsen (FEE Director), Sophie Bachet (YRE), Erik van Dijk (Green Key) and Nanna Balsby (Blue Flag).

For more detailed contact information, please consult the FEE website: www.fee-international.org.

## FEE PROGRAMME SPONSORS 2008

FEE would sincerely like to thank the sponsors of the FEE programmes. This financial support is crucial in order for FEE to continue creating high quality activities and high levels of awareness through our environmental education programmes all over the world.

*ABAE / FEE Portugal:*
www.abae.pt

*Toyota Fund for Europe:*
www.toyotafund.eu

*Beach Trotters:*
www.beach-trotters.com

*Shipmate:*
www.shipmate.nl

*Beach Tech:*
www.beach-tech.com

*Friluftsrådet (Danish Outdoor Council):*
www.friluftsraadet.dk

*Corona Extra:*
www.coronasavethebeach.org

*FEEE France:*
www.f3e.org

*République Française (French Republic), Ministry for the Environment and Ministry for Research:*
www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr and www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr

*Skogbrukets Kursinstitutt (Forestry Extension Institute):*
www.skogkurs.no

*Région Rhône-Alpes (French Rhône-Alps region):*
www.rhonealpes.fr

*World Future Council:*
www.worldfuturecouncil.org

*Panasonic Corporation:*
www.panasonic.net

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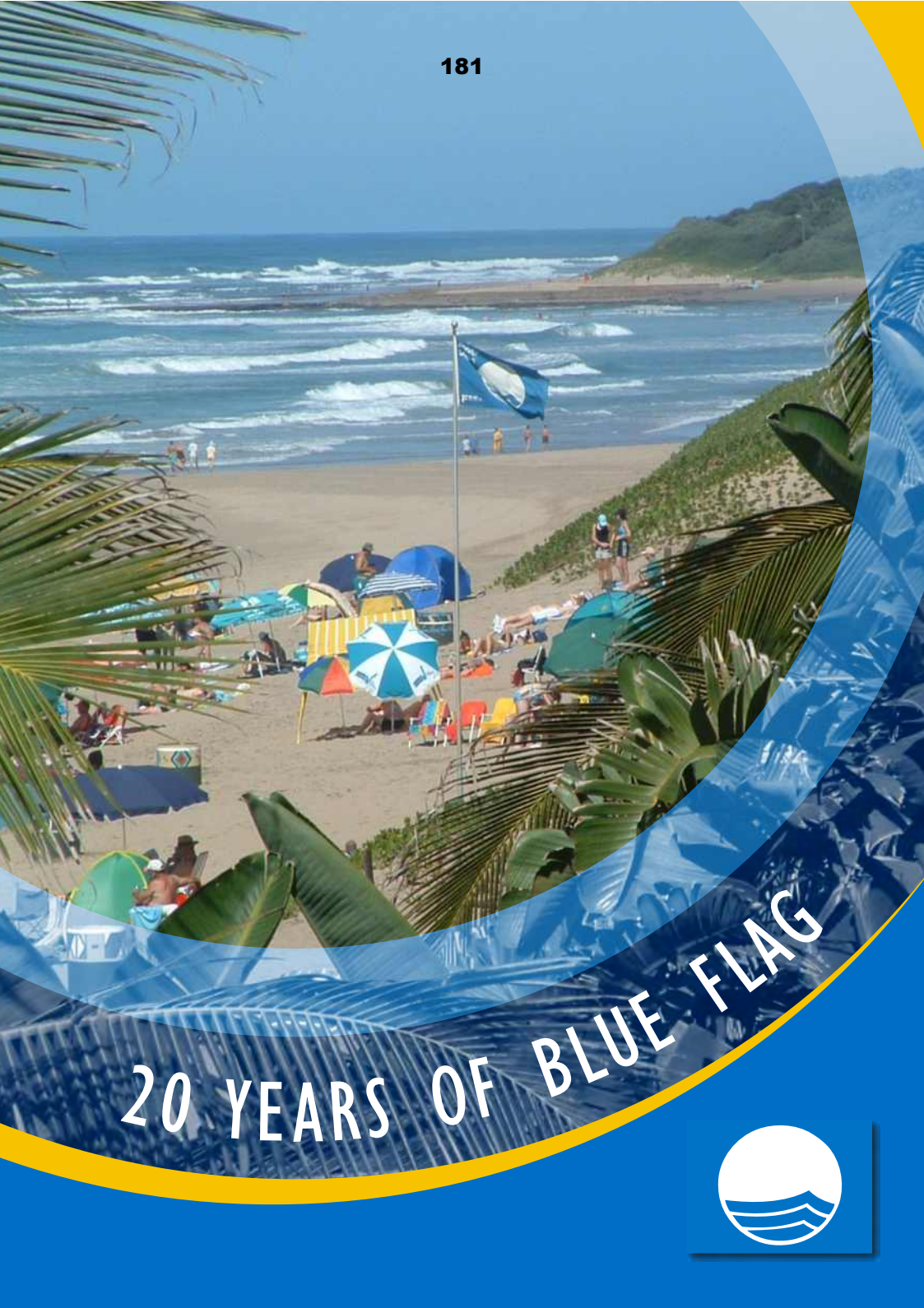


# 20 YEARS OF BLUE FLAG

# About BLUE FLAG

The Blue Flag Programme, this year celebrating its 20th Anniversary, is an exclusive, voluntary eco-label for beaches and marinas. The programme is run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

The Blue Flag is awarded to beaches and marinas that meet a specific set of criteria concerning environmental information & education, water quality, safety & services, and environmental management. It has become a symbol of quality recognized by tourists and tour operators around the world. The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management and staff.

As of 2007 there were over 3200 sites awarded with the Blue Flag in 37 countries including countries in Europe, countries in the Caribbean, Morocco, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. Current information about participating countries and awarded sites can be found on the website www.blueflag.org.

The Blue Flag can be found flying above a great variety of locations: warm Caribbean coasts, Mediterranean destinations, quiet Baltic Sea coves and along the open oceans. The Blue Flag Programme in each participating country each have their own stories to tell. On the following pages you will find some information on the history of the programme and some reports from a few of our partner organisations.

# Message
## from the United Nations Environment Programme

Tourism is one of the world's largest industries and one that heavily depends on the natural resource base. Attractive coastal landscapes such as sandy beaches, dune areas, estuaries, and coastal lakes are preferred sites for tourism development. The tourism industry makes significant contributions to the economies of many developing nations particularly to foreign exchange earnings, employment, and GDP.

However, uncontrolled and ill planned tourism significantly degrades the environment. The last 10 years have seen incredible changes in the way environmental matters have been addressed. During this time, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has tried to respond effectively to the needs of the tourism industry. It has done this by developing technical knowledge and making it available through its network as well as creating solid partnerships that could create a replication effect. UNEP firmly believes that only through partnership between the various players we can reverse the current trends of environmental degradation and in particular the loss of biodiversity.

As a valued UNEP partner, with whom we have cooperated for many years, Blue Flag has implemented on the ground the principle of continuous improvement. It has done this by constantly seeking new ways of involving local communities, workers, destinations and associated businesses in environmental protection. Today, Blue Flag is a recognised eco label that is implemented in more than 37 countries and covers over 3200 beaches and marinas. Thus, Blue Flag serves as a world-wide example of the role that organisations can play, working together to build a common conscience, and providing guidance towards sustainable tourism development.

**Arab Hoballah**
Chief
Sustainable Consumption and Production branch
UNEP - DTIE

# Message
# from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation

Over the last decade and in line with other United Nations agencies, the World Tourism Organisation's mission (UNWTO) has significantly shifted towards ensuring a sustainable development of tourism, in all types of destinations. The work of its Sustainable Development of Tourism Department covers many fields, including policies and guidelines, certification systems, indicators of sustainability, climate change issues, sustainable tourism at specific destinations, including coasts and islands, and last but not least, the achievement of the first Millennium Development Goal: poverty alleviation.

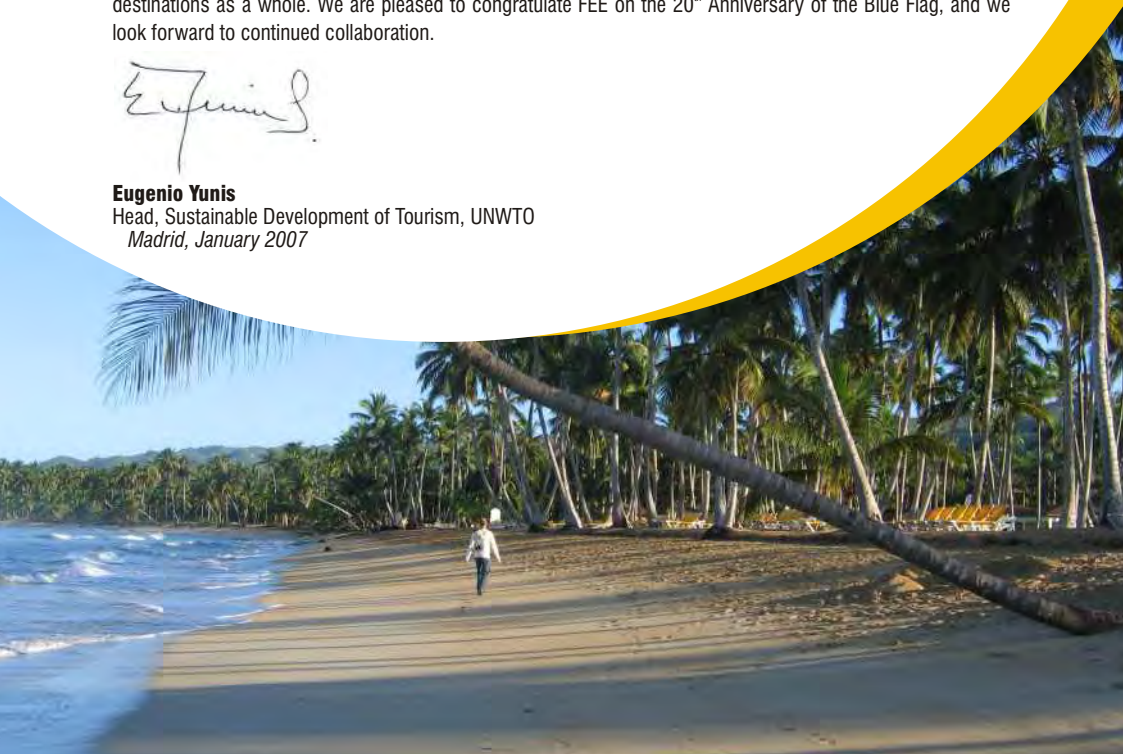
In this context, and with beach and marine-based tourism maintaining its predominant size over other forms of tourism, UNWTO has been supporting the Blue Flag initiative since the early 1990's, recognising that it has been so far the only eco-label in the tourism sector that has achieved a critical mass, with over 3200 beaches and marinas certified in 37 countries, while at the same time being financially independent and sustainable.

In 1996, UNWTO, jointly with the Foundation for Environmental Education and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) produced and published, *"Awards for improving the coastal environment: the example of the Blue Flag*"; this publication was followed by a number of other activities in an effort to spread the Blue Flag Programme beyond Europe, an aim that has already been achieved. In addition, the World Tourism Organisation is an active member of the Blue Flag International Jury and has supported in other ways the expansion of the label throughout the world.

The Blue Flag brings a reliable guarantee to tourists and tour operators regarding the environmental quality of beaches and marinas. Furthermore, it has served to encourage local authorities and other tourism stakeholders to constantly enhance the environmental quality of their bathing waters and other tourism facilities, and of their destinations as a whole. We are pleased to congratulate FEE on the 20th Anniversary of the Blue Flag, and we look forward to continued collaboration.



**Eugenio Yunis**
Head, Sustainable Development of Tourism, UNWTO
*Madrid, January 2007*



# BLUE FLAG celebrates 20 YEARS

At 20 years of age, the Blue Flag Programme is likely the oldest living and thriving eco-label of its kind. The success of the programme is credited to those dedicated individuals, from the local to the international level, who believed in the programme's message and potential enough to put their energy into making it a reality. After 20 years, the good effects of the Blue Flag Programme can be seen at beaches and marinas around the world.

### How It Began

The Blue Flag Programme started in Europe in 1987 with the purpose of encouraging beaches to comply with the EU Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC. From this starting point, the programme has grown and developed.

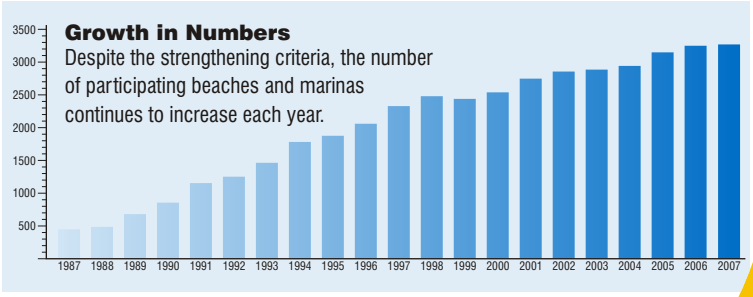
The idea was originally born in France in 1985 where the first French coastal municipalities were awarded the Blue Flag on the basis of criteria covering sewage treatment and bathing water quality. 1987 was the "European Year of the Environment". The Foundation for Environmental Education (at that time known as FEEE) presented the concept of the Blue Flag to the Commission and they agreed to help launch the Blue Flag Programme as one of several other activities that year. The original French concept of the Blue Flag was developed to include other issues such as waste management and coastal planning and protection. Marinas also became eligible for the programme. In 1987, 244 beaches and 208 marinas from 10 countries were awarded the Blue Flag.

Since then, the criteria have become more holistic and encompassing, changing with current research and technology and addressing a much wider range of issues than when it started. The criteria have also become more stringent and have taken on an international perspective. The programme has also developed geographically, moving outside of Europe first in 2001 to South Africa, and since then spreading to countries in the Caribbean, Oceania and North and South America.

# CREATING AN *international standard*

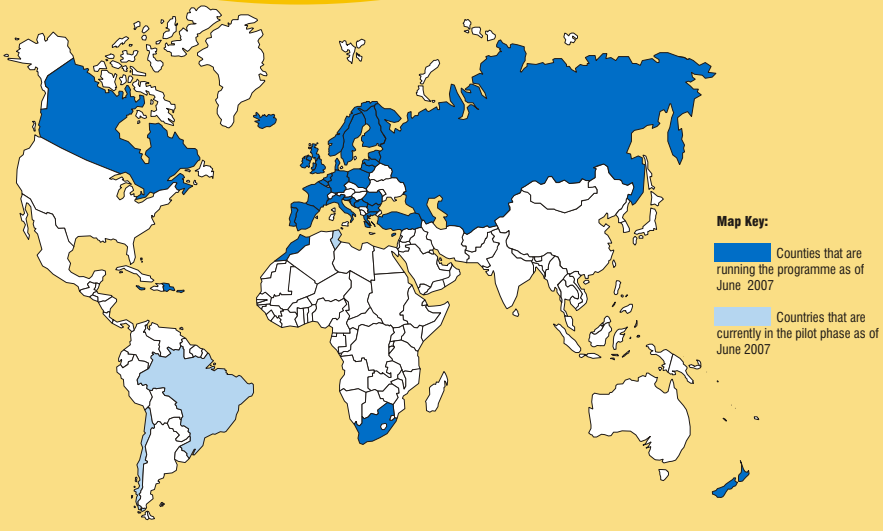
One of the strengths of the programme today is that it is international and the criteria set an international standard to be followed by all participants. Creating and maintaining international standards has taken much effort.

As the programme spread to more European countries after 1987, each country developed their own version of the Blue Flag beach criteria. It was later decided that consolidation was needed and in 1992 the beach criteria were merged into one European version.




In 2001 when the programme spread outside of Europe to South Africa, another version of the beach criteria was formed for that region to fit their specific conditions. Then yet another version was formed for the Caribbean and then for Canada. In 2006, the beach criteria from all countries were again consolidated into one international version. Today, all participating countries follow the same International Blue Flag criteria for both beaches and marinas, with some regional variations.

The international criteria today set the minimum allowed standard for the programme. At the national level, it is possible to make the criteria more demanding. It is often these developments at the national level that are later adopted at the international level, during periodic criteria revisions, thus sustaining continual improvement.



# Blue Flag Ireland

## *Known and Respected*

*The Blue Flag Programme has been operating in Ireland since 1988 and has seen substantial growth during this time from 21 Blue Flags in 1988 to 84 flags in 2007. The programme typically generates a lot of publicity, particularly during the National Awards Ceremonies in early June each year. This interest is due to the fact that the Blue Flag is a well-respected and recognised eco-label with the Irish public.*

*The Blue Flags are almost always presented by the Minister for the Environment at the National Award ceremony. The Blue Flag Programme is funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in Ireland and is seen as a very important component in coastal zone management for the country. Last year Irish Blue Flag beaches were included in the UK's Marine Conservation Society's Good Beach guide (www.mcsuk.org), obviously creating more good publicity.*

The Blue Flag Programme has been operating in Ireland since 1988 and has seen substantial growth during this time from 21 Blue Flags in 1988 to 84 flags in 2007.

*The Blue Flag Programme in Ireland also liaises and where possible integrates with other FEE programmes such as Eco-Schools (Green-Schools). Green-Schools that carry out one of their action days on a Blue Flag beach receive a Blue Flag certificate. This of course promotes both programmes.*

*The Individual Blue Flag for boat owners has recently been promoted at boat shows. The Irish Blue Flag Programme now has over 80 boat owners registered and willing to commit to an environmental code of conduct while on the water, including the Sea Scouts in Bray and Sligo and many boat owners from inland and coastal waters.*

*During the 20th Anniversary Year of the International Blue Flag the Irish Blue Flag Programme hopes to maintain the high standards at Irish Blue Flag beaches and marinas and also to continue to increase Blue Flag numbers in Ireland.*

*Blue Flag in Ireland is run by An Taisce www.antaisce.org*

# Blue Flag Finland

## *Using Blue Flag criteria to promote Environmental Law*

*Finland has taken the Blue Flag criteria a step further, demanding toilet water pump-out facilities at their marinas, as part of the solution for solving the eutrophication problem of the Baltic Sea.*

*The Baltic Sea and especially the Gulf of Finland are not healthy. Eutrophication of the Baltic Sea is visible for everyone, appearing during late summer as massive algae blooms. The deterioration of water quality and the death of large areas of sea-bottom flora and fauna are serious problems that affect the quality of life of people living around the Baltic Sea on many levels.*

*The Baltic Sea is an inland sea, heavily impacted by the surrounding population. There is very little water exchange with the Atlantic and low circulation along the coasts and archipelagos. The only way to improve the condition of the Baltic Sea is to put a stop to all anthropogenic sources of nutrients. This was the motivation behind recommendation 19/9 of the Helsinki convention (HELCOM), to prohibit toilet waste water discharges directly into the water, not only from big ships, but also from leisure crafts.*

> ....the Blue Flag criteria have been a great tool in raising the standards of Finnish marinas over the years and keeping them up with the speed of today's environmental and technical developments.

*The Blue Flag Programme in Finland wanted Blue Flag marinas to contribute to this effort. As early as 1996, Blue Flag Finland instated an obligatory criterion to have toilet water pump-out facilities in all Finnish Blue Flag marinas, since it became a law that all boats must have a toilet system in place. By providing pump-out facilities, the Blue Flag marinas have helped motivate boat owners to make the necessary changes in their boat's toilet systems and marinas to invest in the waste water pump-out equipment.*

*Today, Finland is further along than any other country around the Baltic Sea in complying with this important HELCOM recommendation. The initiative and example of the Blue Flag marinas has to be acknowledged in this connection. Besides the positive influence on stakeholders, the Blue Flag criteria have been a great tool in raising the standards of Finnish marinas over the years and keeping them up to date with the speed of today's environmental and technical developments.*

*Blue Flag in Finland is run by the Keep the Archipelago Tidy Association*
*www.pidasaaristosiistina.fi*

# Blue Flag Italy

## *The Importance of Contact with Municipalities*

*FEE Italy has found that close contact with the municipalities is vitally important for successfully administering the Blue Flag Programme there. To help motivate close cooperation and contact with the municipalities, FEE Italia holds yearly meetings with municipal Mayors and those responsible for technical aspects. There are many good reasons for closely involving the municipalities since they play an integral role in most aspects of the programme.*

*Bathing water quality is directly dependent on the adequacy of the waste water treatment plants in the area. One of the main criteria of the programme in Italy is to demand the use of suitable waste water treatment facilities. They must be the right size with the capacity to effectively purify waste water, especially during the summer season when use is highest due to tourism.*

> ...for FEE Italia the Blue Flag is the acknowledgement of the capacity of municipalities to face and resolve the different callings of their territory...

*For FEE Italia it is also important to refer to municipalities concerning recycling. Recycling is required on Blue Flag beaches. It is imperative that the recyclable materials collected by individual operators is then correctly collected and transported to different facilities to be recycled and re-used.*

*FEE Italia also believes that environmental education and information is better spread by the municipalities. Municipalities can harmonise the different initiatives in their territory so as to reach everywhere. Municipalities can also arrange space in their Tourist Offices to inform about local natural and sensitive areas and initiatives being offered. The municipalities can also best determine which environmental initiatives will best balance the negative effects of tourism in their location: for example, promoting the use of sustainable transport, arranging decentralised parking, running a shuttle bus service to the beach, pedestrian areas, or cycling paths.*

*Finally, for FEE Italia, the Blue Flag is the acknowledgement of the capacity of municipalities to face and resolve the different callings of their territory, strengthening the protection of it in order to avoid threats from local economical development.*

*Blue Flag in Italy is run by FEE Italia www.feeitalia.org*

# Blue Flag Morocco

## A Beach Accessible for All

*The beach of Achakar on the Atlantic Ocean in the north of Morocco has always been a beautiful beach, located in a wonderful natural area, but this beach had not been accessible for disabled visitors due to the steep terrain.*

*As part of the Blue Flag Programme, this beach was equipped with removable wooden ramps. The wooden ramps were designed to reach from the cliffs above the beach, down to the sand. They also provide access to the sanitary facilities, with a toilet designed for the use of disabled visitors. The ramps allow for all visitors to enjoy the beauty of this beach.*

*A local association in partnership with the Moroccan Red Cross also offers many free services to the disabled visitors, including assistance for access, assistance for swimming, and environmental activities.*

...beaches with social benefits...

## Benefits for the Beach and the City

*As part of the Blue Flag Programme, the beach of Essaouira invested in new equipment, and decided to focus on creating a park for children on the beach. This development is beneficial for the beach and also for the city.*

*The park helps to meet some of the needs of the city regarding leisure activities for children, by providing them with a place to go. It also contributes to the employment situation of the city by creating five new permanent jobs.*

*For the parents of beach visitors, it is of course an excellent added value. The kids can spend their time and energy playing in the park, while giving parents some quiet time for relaxing on the beach.*

*Essaouira has also developed an excellent environmental education centre. It is managed by local associations and offers many different activities on the beach.*

*Blue Flag in Morocco is run by Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement www.fm6e.org*

# Blue Flag Slovenia

## *Working towards a Paperless Programme*

*FEE, as an environmental education organisation, tries to promote environmentally friendly behaviour and sustainable development throughout its programmes. For this reason, the Blue Flag Programme in Slovenia has started to develop the Blue Flag e-application system, since behind the beaches and marinas flying the flags, lie many hours of work in the office. They aim to reduce the use of paper and ink, and to promote paperless communication within the Blue Flag Programme that could be used worldwide.*

*Using an e-application would be helpful both for the people filling in the questionnaires, and the people gathering and analyzing the data. An automated procedure would of course also help reduce programme costs, assure better archiving of data, and possibly even simplify the whole application procedure for all participants.*

*As a result of all this, the National Blue Flag Coordinators would have more time to deal with other key issues since the automated process would also provide the possibility for automatically generated reports and analyses, export of data and interchange of data with the International Blue Flag database.*

*The key issue for creating a good automated e-application system is first to prepare an electronic questionnaire, defining imperative and guideline values and other measurable limits to optimise the automation process. Some of the necessary features would include: authentication and verification of users, the possibility to attach files, e-mail reminders, easy editing from year to year without disrupting the archives, and an automatic analysing and reporting system for the National Jury and for the International Blue Flag Coordination, providing also the possibility to export data into Excel.*

*Blue Flag in Slovenia is run by Doves - FEE Slovenia www.drustvo-doves.siltalia www.feeitalia.org*

....the Blue Flag Programme in Slovenia started to develop the Blue Flag e-application system, with the aim to reduce the use of paper and ink, and to promote paperless communication within the Blue Flag Programme that could be used worldwide.

# BLUE FLAG
## Thank You!

The Blue Flag Programme proudly celebrates 20 years of successful work with beaches and marinas around the world, and we look forward to many more years of development and the addition of new organisations, partners and participants into our international family.

The International Blue Flag Programme is very thankful of the support we have received from our international partners and sponsors. Their support, assistance, and expertise have helped to make this programme an international success. We look forward to many more years of cooperation and the spread of Blue Flag's good practices around the world.

## International Partners

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
www.unepie.org

United National World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)
www.world-tourism.org

International Council of Marina Industry Associations (ICOMIA)
www.icomia.org

International Lifesaving Federation (ILS)
www.ilsf.org

The European Union
europa.eu.int

Reef Check
www.reefcheck.org

EUCC - the Coastal Union
www.eucc.net

## International Sponsors

BeachTech
www.beach-tech.com

Beach Trotters
www.beach-trotters.com

Blue Beach SafeBox Services
www.bluebeachsafebox.com

Boxen Media
www.boxenmedia.com

First Choice Holidays and Flights Ltd.
www.firstchoice.co.uk

Shipmate
www.shipmate.nl

**Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**
FEE is a non-profit non-governmental organisation with member organisations in 48 countries as of June 2007. FEE aims to promote sustainable development through environmental education. The education can be in the form of formal school education, training of staff and general awareness raising.
Please read more about FEE and FEE's other programmes at www.fee-international.org

**International Blue Flag Coordination**
Foundation for Environmental Education
c/o Danish Outdoor Council
Scandiagade 13
DK-2450 Copenhagen SV
Denmark
Tel: +45 3328 0411
Fax: +45 3379 0179
blueflag@blueflag.org
coordination@blueflag.org
www.blueflag.org

# An Introduction to FEE and its activities

**Danish Outdoor Council**
**Foundation for Environmental Education**

## Foundation for Environmental Education

- Non-profit, non-governmental organisation
- Aims to promote sustainable development through environmental education
- Umbrella organisation with one member organisation in each country
  - Member organisations in 59 countries by June 2009
- Runs five environmental education programmes

## History of FEE

- FEEE (Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe): established in 1981
- Blue Flag: adopted with the support of the European Commission in 1987
- In 1994 the Eco-Schools and YRE programmes were added
- LEAF was implemented as a FEE programme in 2000 and Green Key in 2003
- In 2001 FEEE became international and changed name to FEE

## Danish Outdoor Council

- Danish non-profit, non-governmental organisation, established in 1942
- Aims to promote outdoor recreation and understanding for nature
- Umbrella organisation with more than 90 member organisations
- Main Danish organisation involved in environmental education
- Danish member of FEE since 1981
- Offering all 5 FEE programmes

## Countries with FEE member organisations

## FEE Programmes

**Blue Flag**

**Learning About Forests**

**Eco-Schools**

**Green Key**

**Young Reporters for the Environment**

## Blue Flag

- Eco-label for beaches and marinas
- Annual award (compliance)
- Strong tourism links
- Four areas of criteria:
  - Environmental Education and Information
  - Environmental Management
  - Water Quality
  - Safety and Services

## Blue Flag

- Running in 41 countries in 2009
- More than 3450 sites are awarded in 2009
- Application approved by National and International Jury
- Individual Blue Flag for Boat owners at marinas

## Blue Flag in South Africa

- Implemented since 2001
- Extensive feasibility phase
- 30 beaches and 0 marinas awarded Blue Flag in 2009/10
- Obligatory pilot or developmental phase
- Programme evaluation 2008

## Green Key

- Eco-label for tourism facilities
  - Hotels
  - Hostels
  - Conference centres
  - Campsites
  - Holiday centres
- A voluntary award given one year at a time
- Standard international criteria and specialized national criteria

## Green Key

**Criteria areas:**

- Water
- Waste
- Energy
- Chemical use
- Food and beverages
- Involvement/awareness of guests
- Environmental management
- Staff involvement
- Open spaces
- Climate Change

## Eco-Schools

- Environmental management and certification programme
- Local Agenda 21 at the level of the school and its community
- Students are involved in the decision-making process and activities. Other stakeholders participate
- Themes: Energy, Water, Waste, Climate Change
- Green Flag as an eco-certification for good environmental practice!

## Eco-Schools

**Involved in 2007/2008:**

- Students 6.375.575
- Teachers 392.653
- Schools 27.304
- Local authorities: 4.927
- Countries: 44

## Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)

- Network of secondary school teachers and student
- 3 objectives:
  - Local inquiry problem and solution oriented
  - Journalistic production
  - Communication to a local audience

## Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)

- International cooperation with other students to create joint articles
- Best articles collected into an international book
- Awards are given for best articles and photos
- Around 500 projects in 2007-2008
- YRE offered in Denmark

## Learning about Forests (LEAF)

- Encourages teachers to use the forest for educational activities
- Encourages learning about forests, from forests, in forests
- International network between participating countries
- Teaching materials are shared across borders

## Learning about Forests (LEAF)

- Locally adapted teaching materials
- The LEAF Programme reflects all functions that forests fulfil for people:
  - Cultural, ecological, economical, social
- LEAF themes
- In Denmark: run by Danish Forest Association

## FEE International Partners

UNEP
UN Environment Programme

UNWTO
UN World Tourism Organization

UNESCO
UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

More information about the activities of FEE can be found at:

***www.friluftsraadet.dk***

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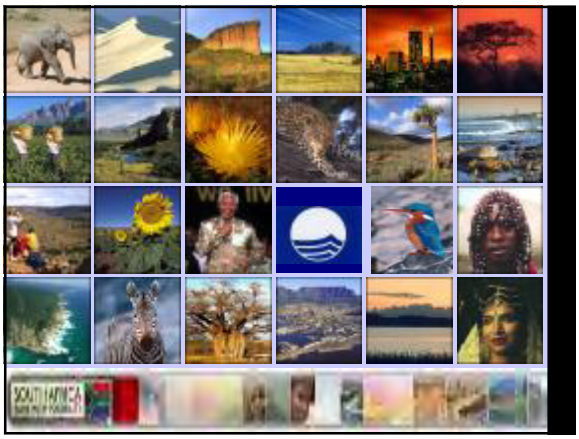


## BLUE FLAG IN SOUTH AFRICA

- Implemented since 2001
- Extensive feasibility phase
- 30 beaches awarded Blue Flag in 2009/10 – municipalities manage
- Obligatory pilot or developmental phase
- Programme evaluation 2008

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PLAN

Create conditions for responsible tourism growth & development

Promote conservation and development of natural and cultural resources

Protect and enhance quality & safety of the environment

Provide accessible environmental and tourism information

## WHAT MAKES BLUE FLAG SUCH A SUCCESS ?

- Criteria for awarding Blue Flag set in advance
- Award valid for one year only
- Award has to be earned anew each year
- Award may be withdrawn at any time if criteria are no longer fulfilled
- Awards made by independent committees without vested interests

## WHO BENEFITS FROM BLUE FLAG ?

Local authorities

International tourists

Domestic tourists

Recreational beach-goers

Local communities

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Benefits: Cleaner Coastal Waters

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

**Benefits: Systems for Beach Management**

- Puts in place functioning systems for implementing policy requirements
- Generates effective working relationships across institutional divisions
- Creates a good governance profile for the municipality and indirectly, national government.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

**Benefits: Mobilisation of Resources**

BF mobilises resources
- through local government
- from experts
- from local business

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

**Benefits: Safe and Clean Beaches for Tourism**

- High standards of water quality, safety and facilities valued by visitors
- Crime is a major deterrent from visitors spending time in or near beaches perceived as unsafe and BF provides security.
- Tourism creates wealth and employment – and the beaches do attract visitors!

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

**Benefits: Effective Partnerships**

**Partnerships and cooperative governance have been forged at a number of levels:**

- **National + local government**
- **Government + civil society**
- **Local government + local business**

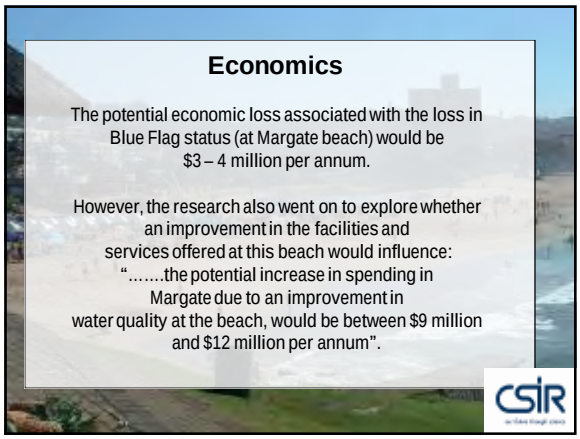
## 2 CASE STUDIES TO SHOW SUCCESS OF BLUE FLAG IN SOUTH AFRICA

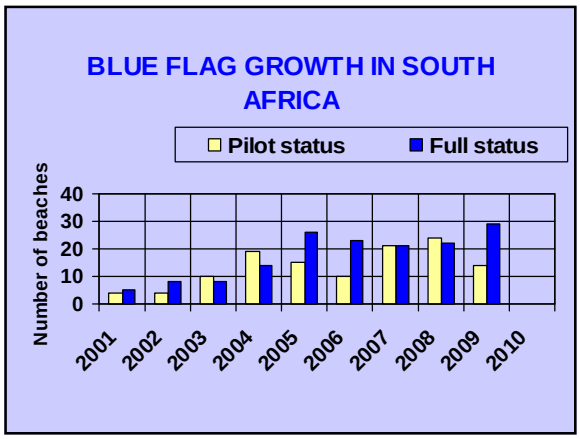
**28 January 2010**

**Decision to come back into the Blue Flag programme.**

**Why?**

**Mastercard Global Consumer Confidence Index results showed Durban had the lowest levels of confidence of all cities in South Africa. In the report, the researchers made mention of the loss of international standard Blue Flag beaches.**




BLUE FLAG GROWTH IN SOUTH AFRICA
Pilot status
Full status
Number of beaches
40
30
20
10
0
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010

BLUE FLAG
www.blueflag.org OR www.wessa.org.za
Thank you.
Grotto Beach, Hemanus

## DHAKA BANGLADESH
## 4 MARCH 2010

**National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Conservation Project in South Asia**

March 2010

Dr R Venkatesan
Regional Coordinator - South Asian Seas Programme
SACEP Colombo Sri Lanka

1

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Our sincere thanks to
Government of Bangladesh
for hosting this workshop

*SACEP & FEE*

2

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## A BRIEF OVERVIEW:

**SOUTH ASIA COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

3

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ORGANIZTION

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

Intergovernmental organization
Established in 1982

Member Countries:
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

4

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ORGANIZTION

## STRUCTURE

1. **The Governing Council (GC)** - represented at the ministerial level and annually meets to take decisions of strategic significance.
2. **The Consultative Committee (CC)** - consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo and provide guidance to the secretariat in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.
3. **National Focal Points (NFP)** - consist of Environment Ministries of the member countries and act as the liaison points in their countries for all matters related to SACEP
4. **The Secretariat** – Hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka and located in Colombo.

SACEP

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LINKAGES

## INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

- SAARC – MoU signed for specific areas of mutual collaboration
- IMO – Complying and implementing IMO Conventions at regional level
- ICRAN/ICRI/UNEP Coral Reef Unit – Implementing GEF and EU projects on MCPAs
- WMO – Early warning and climate change
- UNEP-GPA
- UNEP-RRC.AP
- GIWA – Large Marine Ecosystem Assessment
- CORDIO – Coral reef related activities
- NORAD – Implementation of SSP1 and SSP2

SACEP

## SOUTH ASIAN SEAS PROGRAMME (SASP)

7

S A S P

18 Regional Seas Programmes - 140 Countries

SASP is a co-operative partnership, formally adopted in 1995 for the protection and management of the shared marine waters and associated coastal ecosystems of five maritime SACEP countries - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

SACEP

## PROJECTS

- Regional Training workshop on Marine resource sampling data collection and interpretation for South Asia -Unique effort on board the ship- UNEP, INDIA, UNDOALOS& UNEP GRID Arendal
- IMO Regional workshop on MARPOL Convention for the South and South East Asian countries
- Compilation of Regional Marine Environmental Agreements
- UNEP sponsored Marine Biodiversity Assessment fro South Asia
- Climate change and water resources NORDIC Proposal NIVA Norway & Govt of Bangladesh
- IMO workshop OPRC HNS Maldives May 2010

9

## UNEP - EU - ICRAN funded project MCPAs in South Asia

Ended in December 2008

### Project Components

1. Capacity Building
2. Communications and Data Management
3. Regional Coordination
4. Livelihood Enhancement and Diversification

10

## South Asian Seas Regional Oil & Chemical Spill Contingency Plan

- Status of MoU Maldives has signed
- other 4 countries – in advanced stage

11

"How inappropriate to call this planet Earth, when it is quite clearly Ocean." attributed to Arthur C Clarke

## Healthy Ocean

- Life on earth and the entire global ecosystem depends on ocean for their biodiversity and health
- They provide essential services to humans
  the air we breath
  the water we drink
  the food we eat
  the climate we live in
- Oceans and seas were healthy; Once it was thought they have the capacity and ability to can absorb any level of disruption from human activities due to their expansive size

13

## OCEAN AND CLIMATE
## Blue Carbon

- Multiagency UNEP report Blue Carbon
- Of all the biological or Green carbon that is captured worldwide over one-half is done by marine organisms –blue carbon
- Largest long term Carbon sink and store and redistribute CO2
- Estimated 50% CO2 released world wide transportation sector is captured and stored by Blue carbon
  - Carrying capacity of Ocean??

14

## Critical issues of South Asia

- High coastal population density
- Land based sources of Pollution
- Climate Change – failing monsoons, Ocean acidification, Sea erosion, flash floods
- Uncontrolled Over fishing
- Large fishing population, with limited opportunities for alternative employment

15

## Bangladesh

16

## Challenges

- Unique scenery
- Blessed with largest riverine delta in the world.
- Has vast inland waterways -
  southern side - Bay of Bengal.
- Subjected to Several types of natural calamities
- Economy substantially depends on maritime activities
- Strategic sea route for carriage of oil for South Asia
- Has explored gas under the seabed

17

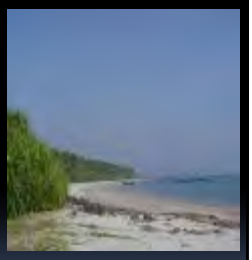
## Challenges

- Imports over one million ton of crude oil
- Sustainable volume of clean petroleum products
- About ¼ of the domestic cargo and passenger traffic is carried by about 9000 inland & coastal ships.
- About 2000 sea-going vessels call at sea ports
- Ranks third in ship scrapping.
- Pollution of waters in Bangladesh originates, *inter alia*, from the discharge of wastewater, oil, oily wastewater, noxious substances from ships
- Signatories to many International conventions and Protocols on marine Pollution

18

## St Martin's Islands

Only Coral Island in Bangladesh.



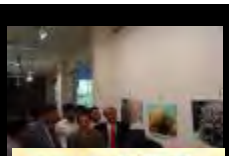
19

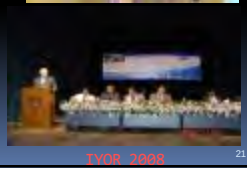
## GOB Initiatives

- Sustainable Environmental Management Programme
- Bangladesh: Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development
- Regional Climate Prediction for National Vulnerability Assessments
- Impact of Climate and Sea Level Change in part of the Indian Subcontinent
- Dialogue on Water and Climate
- Promotion of Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Abatement
- National Water Management Plan Project
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management Programme
- Offshore Islands Renewable Energy development
- Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
- Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change Project

20

## Awareness





IYOR 2008

21

## Efforts

- Protection and preservation of the biodiversity and ecosystems of Bay and coastal and inland waterways,
- Crucial to security of human food chain
- Request attention and care

22

## Blue Flag Beach certification Programme

A Clean Beach - A Tourist Heaven

To bring together Environment and Tourism sector

23

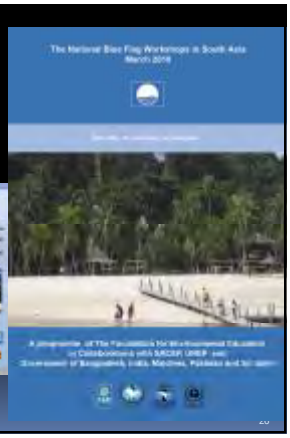
## JOINT PROGRAMME OF

- GOVERNMENTS OF BANGLADESH INDIA MALDIVES PAKISTAN SRI LANKA
- UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
- FEE
- UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
- INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

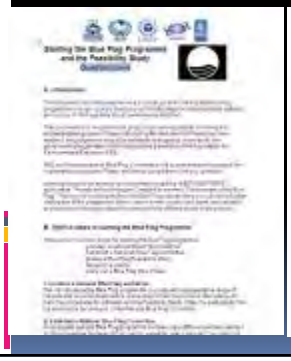
24

## REGIONAL PROJECT

## FEE



## Questionnaire



## THE WAY FORWARD

UNEP REQUIREMENT

- To formulate national committee
- Identify coastal areas for blue flag programme
- Evolve blue flag programme – national initiative
- To develop regional project with inputs from countries

GOA INDIA
9 MARCH 2010

National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Conservation Project in South Asia

March 2010

Dr R Venkatesan
Regional Coordinator - South Asian Seas Programme
SACEP Colombo Sri Lanka

1

Our sincere thanks to

Ministry of Environment and Forests Government of India
Ministry of Earth Sciences Government of India
&
Government of Goa

for hosting this workshop

*SACEP & FEE*

2

# A BRIEF OVERVIEW:

SOUTH ASIA COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

3

ORGANIZTION

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

Intergovernmental organization
Established in 1982

Member Countries:
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

4

ORGANIZTION

## STRUCTURE

1. **The Governing Council (GC)** - represented at the ministerial level and annually meets to take decisions of strategic significance.
2. **The Consultative Committee (CC)** - consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo and provide guidance to the secretariat in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.
3. **National Focal Points (NFP)** - consist of Environment Ministries of the member countries and act as the liaison points in their countries for all matters related to SACEP
4. **The Secretariat** – Hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka and located in Colombo.

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LINKAGES

## INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

- SAARC – MoU signed for specific areas of mutual collaboration
- IMO – Complying and implementing IMO Conventions at regional level
- ICRAN/ICRI/UNEP Coral Reef Unit – Implementing GEF and EU projects on MCPAs
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- CORDIO – Coral reef related activities
- NORAD – Implementation of SSP1 and SSP2

SACEP

## SOUTH ASIAN SEAS PROGRAMME (SASP)

7

S A S P

18 Regional Seas Programmes - 140 Countries

SASP is a co-operative partnership, formally adopted in 1995 for the protection and management of the shared marine waters and associated coastal ecosystems of five maritime SACEP countries - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

SACEP

## PROJECTS

- Regional Training workshop on Marine resource sampling data collection and interpretation for South Asia -Unique effort on board the ship- UNEP, INDIA, UNDOALOS& UNEP GRID Arendal
- IMO Regional workshop on MARPOL Convention for the South and South East Asian countries
- Compilation of Regional Marine Environmental Agreements
- UNEP sponsored Marine Biodiversity Assessment fro South Asia
- Climate change and water resources NORDIC Proposal NIVA Norway & Govt of Bangladesh
- IMO workshop OPRC HNS Maldives May 2010

9

"How inappropriate to call this planet Earth, when it is quite clearly Ocean."
attributed to Arthur C Clarke

Non-living resources

The proportion of sea Vs land

## Healthy Ocean

- Life on earth and the entire global ecosystem depends on ocean for their biodiversity and health
- They provide essential services to humans
  the air we breath
  the water we drink
  the food we eat
  the climate we live in
- Oceans and seas were healthy; Once it was thought they have the capacity and ability to can absorb any level of disruption from human activities due to their expansive size

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## Critical issues of South Asia

- High coastal population density
- Land based sources of Pollution
- Climate Change – failing monsoons, Ocean acidification, Sea erosion, flash floods
- Uncontrolled Over fishing
- Large fishing population, with limited opportunities for alternative employment

13

## MARINE BIODIVERSITY

1. *Marine Biodiversity source of food*
2. *Marine Biodiversity heals*
3. *Marine Biodiversity brings income*
4. *Marine Biodiversity protects*
5. *Marine Biodiversity soothes*

**Can you imagine a world without ocean and these eye-catching gifts?**

## Threats

- Anthropogenic effect

15

Meeting on

# COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

3 rd Saturday September

4th September 2006

COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

SEPTEMBER 16, 2006

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME & INDIAN COAST GUARD

Focus Participant Photo Gallery Links Downloads

**The 3rd Saturday September is observed as the "Coastal Cleanup Day".**

**The coastal cleanup campaign is being jointly organised in India by UNEP -- Sou Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)/ South Asian Seas (SAS) ar Indian Coast Guard for developing 'Marine Litter Activity'.**

•Marine litter is identified as a priority activity for both the SACEP and UNEP's Regional Seas Programme

•It is also the world's largest one-day volunteer effort to Cleanup the marine environment

•The volunteers also found 237 entangled animals, in the marine debris. Most of the animals were saved because of the efforts of the volunteers

•Last year more than 450,000 people from over 90 countries around the world participated in the Cleanup collecting over 3,424,622.3935 kilogs

•Thousands of people worldwide collect debris

In India, during 1995, nearly 15,000 people participated to remove 253 tonnes of marine litter from a coast lin 238 km which was coordinated by Indian Coast Guard.

Number of Visits : 28

## ICC DAY PAMPHLET

MARITIME DAY CELEBRATION – PAINTINGS OF WINNERS IN THE COMPETITION children 6 to 12 years old

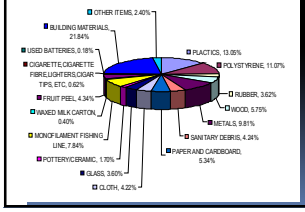
International Coastal Cleanup Day 2006

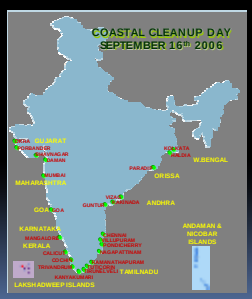
Development of a regional marine litter activity in the South Asian Seas (SAS) region- India

ICC

30000 people participated in this social task
Gathered 307.5 tonnes of marine litter 238 km stretch of coastline in coordination with the Indian Coast Guard.

PERCENTAGE OF MARINE LITTER




Blue Flag Beach certification Programme

A Clean Beach - A Tourist Heaven

To bring together Environment and Tourism sector

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JOINT PROGRAMME OF

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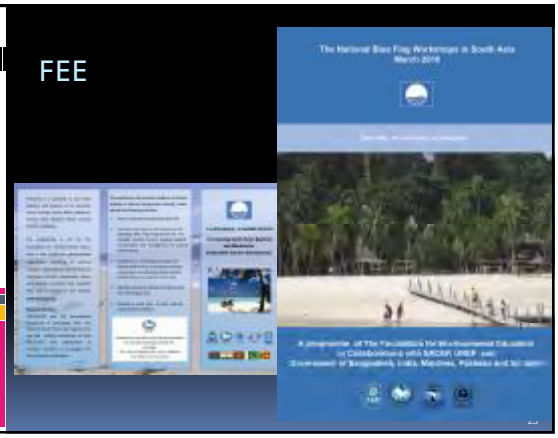

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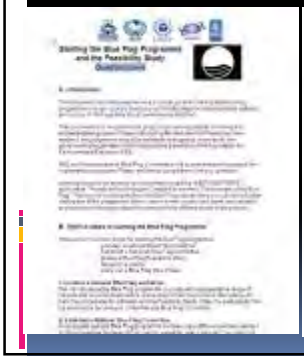

## Relevance to Goa

- Opportunity by conducting this workshop
- Ideally suited to start Blue Flag programme
- Support of MoEF
- Blend of Tourism and Environment
- Research support
- Public awareness
- Tourism industry
- Community beach

## THE WAY FORWARD

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MALE MALDIVES
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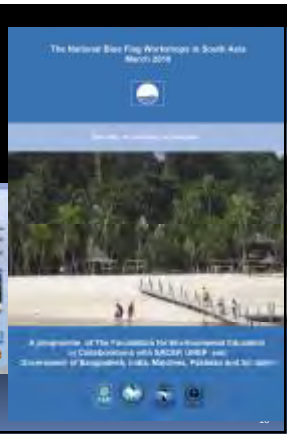
## FEE



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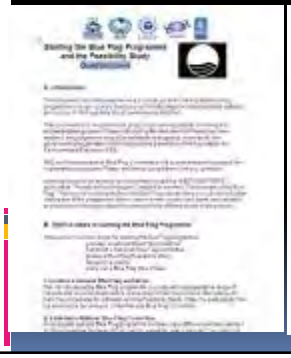

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## THE WAY FORWARD

UNEP REQUIREMENT

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- Evolve blue flag programme – national initiative
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18

Thank You

# 7. Mission Report on the National Workshops on Blue Flag Beach Certification Programme in South Asia

## Structure of National Workshops

SACEP/SASP with technical support from Ms Alison Kelly, an expert from FEE conducted a series of National Workshops in Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka from 3 to 11 March 2010 (Refer Table 1). The Workshop in Pakistan was postponed due to operational constrains and will be conducted in a later date. The workshops provided a platform for establishing a National Programme of Action for the Blue Flag Programme in each country.

Table 1: National Workshops Schedule

| Country | Place | Date | Main Organizer | No of participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | Dhaka | 4 Mar 10 | Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Project, Department of Environment | 36 |
| Maldives | Male' | 7 Mar 10 | Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment & Ministry of Tourism | 29 |
| India | Panjim, Goa | 9 Mar 10 | Goa Tourism Development Corporation Government of Goa India & Ministry of Environment & Forests Govt of India | 30 |
| Sri Lanka | Colombo | 11 Mar 10 | Ministry of Environment and Forest & Sri Lanka Tourist Board Ministry of Tourism Sri Lanka | 27 |

- Scheduled workshop in Karachi, Pakistan was to be organized by the Department of Forests, Federal Ministry of Environment, Pakistan.

The four country workshops provided a broad assessment of the current status of coastal tourism as well as the priority actions that needed to be taken in order to develop sustainable coastal tourism industry, which is environmentally, socially and culturally sensitive. Around 30-50 participants representing relevant stakeholders including Government Agencies (Environment, Tourism, and Fisheries & Shipping), Academia, Tourism Industry, IUCN, WWF, NGOs, Press & Media etc., were present at each workshop.

At each of these workshops, Ms Alison Kelly delivered lectures on Blue Flag Beach process and methodology and case studies on how Government of South Africa supported this programme through NGO which is successfully implementing this activity in 32 beaches during the last 10 years.

Dr. Venkatesan, SASP Co-ordinator presented the importance of GPA and presented a report on the Status of Conventions and Protocols on marine environment by South Asian Seas countries. This report gives insight overview on international and regional agreements ratified by SAS member countries through Ministries of Environment, Fisheries, and Shipping & Law. Next in Agenda were key sectoral presentations by National Experts showing the policy and research initiatives of their Governments in areas such as coastal protection, water quality, eco-tourism and promoting sustainable tourism in general. This was followed by an elaborative discussion amongst the participants and the FEE expert to learn more about the South African Blue Flag initiative, as well as on how to adopt this eco-labeling venture at country level. Issues such as establishment of a national co-ordinating committee, identification of a suitable NGO as well as suitable beach stretches for pilot testing the initiative were discussed in length.

Information material developed to promote the Blue Flag Certifications such as Banner, Catalogue, Post Card, Pamphlet prepared by SACEP/SASP were distributed at each workshop (Refer Annex for details). To obtain baseline information to prepare the regional project, participants were requested to fill a questionnaire prepared by SACEP/SASP. Further a Feasibility study questionnaire prepared by FEE was also distributed.

Refer Annexes for information on each National Workshop.

# 8. Draft Regional Project Proposal

| | |
|---|---|
| Title: | Pilot testing the Blue Flag Initiative in South Asia: Promoting Sustainable Coastal Tourism through Eco-labeling Selected Beach Stretches in the Region |
| Implementing Agencies: | SACEP/SASP, FEE and National Focal Points of five Countries |
| Partners: | Environment and Tourism Ministries, Local Authorities, NGOs, Hoteliers, Coast Conservation Departments and other relevant agencies |
| Duration: | Two Years |

Background and Rationale

Tourism has been one of the world's fastest growing industries in past few decades and prospects for its continued growth is promising, despite the recent downturn in travel numbers and the gloomy economic climate. From the perspective of spatial distribution, tourism is a highly fragmented activity. It is located in specific environments and destinations, where there is a variety of environmental, cultural, social and physical attractions.

One of the most common types of tourism is coastal tourism. It is based on a unique resource combination at the interface of land and sea offering amenities such as water, beaches, scenic beauty, rich terrestrial and marine biodiversity, diversified cultural and historic heritage, healthy food and usually, good infrastructure. It includes a diversity of activities that take place in both coastal zones and coastal waters, which involve the development of tourism capacities (hotels, resorts, second homes, restaurants, etc.) and support infrastructure (ports, marinas, fishing and diving shops, and other facilities). Besides physical conditions, the development of tourism in coastal areas is related to socio-economic features of the receiving environment such as local community interests, health and security conditions, political factors including unpredictable crises and traditional models of tourism.

Tourism and recreation associated with "sea and sun", is recognized as an essential component of domestic and international trade and a major contributor to economic growth in the South Asian Region. The five maritime countries of South Asia; Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are endeavoured with coastal and marine resource which has enormous potential to develop sustainable tourism industry. Several coral reef atolls of Maldives, beach stretches such as Goa in India, and Galle, Negombo and Nilawelli in Sri Lanka is presently is highly popular in the international arena for coastal tourism.

The costs associated with unplanned and/or poorly managed tourism not only involves economic loss to the industry but also leads to the loss of traditional and indigenous ways of life, environmental quality and the natural resource base. Even though tourism is considered as a "soft" industry, it has a major environmental impact in many coastal areas, which are particularly vulnerable to pressures associated with its growth. The relationship existing between tourism and environment is best qualified as a relation of mutual dependence: not only tourism is highly dependent on environmental quality but environmental quality is also highly vulnerable to tourism development. The main challenges for sustainable tourism in coastal areas revolve around extending tourism development from narrow coastal area to the hinterland and, thus, reducing the existing imbalance between communities living in these adjacent areas; reducing the seasonality of demand; providing for a more rational use of resources, especially water and energy and reducing the pollution of coastal and marine environments, as well as threats to wildlife and habitats.

Governments as well as Businesses in the South Asian Region are gradually incorporating sustainability as one of the core values to drive the tourism industry forward with the attempt of being more responsive to environment and community requirements. In light of the above, the application of a beach certification scheme "Blue Flag Programme" which is a voluntary eco-label Programme designed to raise environmental awareness and increase good environmental practices as well as safety among tourists, local populations and beach and marina management staff is highly practical in promoting sustainable coastal tourism in the region. The presence of a Blue Flag indicates to the beach user not only that the beach is clean and safe but also that environmental education programmes and information are in place and is available to the general public. Blue Flag Initiative is mostly practiced in European beaches and presently the Blue Flag certification is being successfully implemented in Caribbean Island countries in association with the UNEP Regional Seas Programme.

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), as the secretariat of the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP) is mandated to promote, protect and manage the marine environment and related coastal ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner. One of the three objectives of SASP is to establish a regional co-operative network of activities concerning subjects/projects of mutual interest for the whole region. Given that land-based sources being a main culprit of coastal and ocean pollution, protecting the seas also requires addressing land-based issues. In this regard, SASP functions as the regional node for GPA programming activities and has engaged in facilitating activities to achieve the objectives minimizing land-based pollution in its member courtiers. The regional as well as National work on GPA has recommended the importance of introducing economic instruments such as "eco labeling" to mitigate coastal and marine pollution. Therefore, introducing the Blue Flag Programme to the SAS region could be ideal, wherein marine environmental issues on land based sources of pollution are addressed with support of different stakeholders to promote sustainable tourism in the region.

To take this activity forward SACEP/SASP prepared a project concept titled "Blue Flag Beach Certification Scheme for South Asian Seas Region: A Clean Beach – A Tourist Haven" with the main objective for initiating a national dialogue and to develop a regional project to pilot test the Blue Flag Programme for selected coastal stretches in the region. In this activity SACEP/SASP collaborated with several partner organizations such as the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), responsible for managing the Blue Flag Programme at international level.

SACEP/SASP with financial support from UNEP conducted four Country workshops (other than in Pakistan, where the event had to be postponed due to unavoidable circumstances) from 3 - 11 March 2010. These national events brought together all the relevant stakeholders and provided a broad assessment of the current status of coastal tourism as well as the priority actions that needed to be taken in order to develop sustainable coastal tourism industry, which is environmentally, socially and culturally sensitive. All the countries understood the importance of addressing issues raised in Blue Flag initiative for sustainability of the industry and are very keen to take this activity forward. Preliminary site selection and identification of representatives for National Blue Flag Committees were undertaken at these workshops. SACEP/SASP and FEE representatives also met key officials such as Ministers and Secretaries in charge of tourism and environment for promoting the activity in the region.

Objectives and Scope of Work

The proposed project plans to take forward the activities identified at the National Workshops. The main objectives of the initiative are to improve understanding of the coastal environment and to promote the incorporation of environmental issues in the decision making processes of local authorities and partners in selected beach stretches of the region.

To achieve the above objectives, following activities will be carried out:

1. National level activities which involves:

    a. Operationalize and strengthen the Co-ordinating Committee initiated at National Workshop.
    b. Select National NGO/or other relevant institutions to act as National Co-ordinator
    c. Conduct country Feasibility Study (to confirm the suitability of each country for the programme)
    d. Revision of criteria (to identify any necessary modifications to the criteria given by the Blue Flag to suit the local/and national situations)
    e. Launching the Blue Flag Pilot phase (2-3 selected beach stretch will be pilot tested)

2. Regional level collaborative activities – undertaken by SACEP/SASP and FEE

    a. SACEP/SASP representative and FEE Mentor to visit each countries at least twice during the project period
    b. Establishment of a web-based forum to share information
    c. Conduct a Regional Workshop at the end of the feasibility phase
    d. Develop the second phase in collaboration with relevant stakeholders

Further the proposed project will support issues such as community-based initiatives to address environmental concerns; Improve operations and maintenance of municipal wastewater management systems; improve environmental practices of industries and commercial establishments; Develop NGO-government partnerships to monitor coastal water quality; and Improve coordination of coastal zone management activities at selected beach stretches.

Budget :

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | SACEP/SASP representative and FEE Mentor to visit each countries at least twice during the project period | | | | | | |
| | Description | | | | | US $ | US $ |
| | DSA | | | | | | |
| | Destination | Nights | No of Persons | No of Trips | DSA (US $) | | |
| | Dhaka | 3 | 2 | 2 | 143.00 | 1,716.00 | |
| | Colombo | 3 | 1 | 1 | 137.00 | 411.00 | |
| | Delhi | 2 | 2 | 2 | 194.00 | 1,552.00 | |
| | Islamabad | 3 | 2 | 2 | 322.00 | 3,864.00 | |
| | Male | 2 | 2 | 2 | 267.00 | 2,136.00 | |
| | Sub Total | | | | | | 9,679.00 |
| | Air Travel | | | | Pax | | |
| | CPH - Colombo - CPH | | | | 2 | 3,508.00 | |
| | Colombo - Delhi - Chennai - Colombo | | | | 4 | 2,036.00 | |
| | Colombo - Maldives - Colombo | | | | 4 | 1,264.00 | |
| | Colombo - Islamabad - Dhaka - Colombo | | | | 4 | 7,368.00 | |
| | Sub Total | | | | | | 14,176.00 |
| 2. | Conduct a Regional Workshop at the end of the feasibility phase | | | | | | |
| | Air travel for 16 participants and Mentor | | | | | 24,988.00 | |
| | DSA for 17 participants @ $137/day for 3 days | | | | | 9,316.00 | |
| | DSA for 10 local participants @ $30/day for 2 days | | | | | 600.00 | |
| | Workshop package for 30 participants for 2 days | | | | | 2,200.00 | |
| | Sub Total | | | | | | 37,104.00 |
| 3. | Assistance to conduct country Feasibility Study (US $ 6,000/- x 5) | | | | | | 30,000.00 |
| 4. | Administrative costs (telephone, photocopy meeting documents, equipment, meeting room arrangements etc) | | | | | | 1,850.00 |
| 5. | Printing of information Handouts, Posters, Report | | | | | | 1,000.00 |
| 6. | Estimated Budget | | | | | | 93,809.00 |

Blue Flag National Workshop in Goa, India

BLUE FLAG WORKSHOP IN MALDIVES

BLUE FLAG WORKSHOP IN SRI LANKA

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